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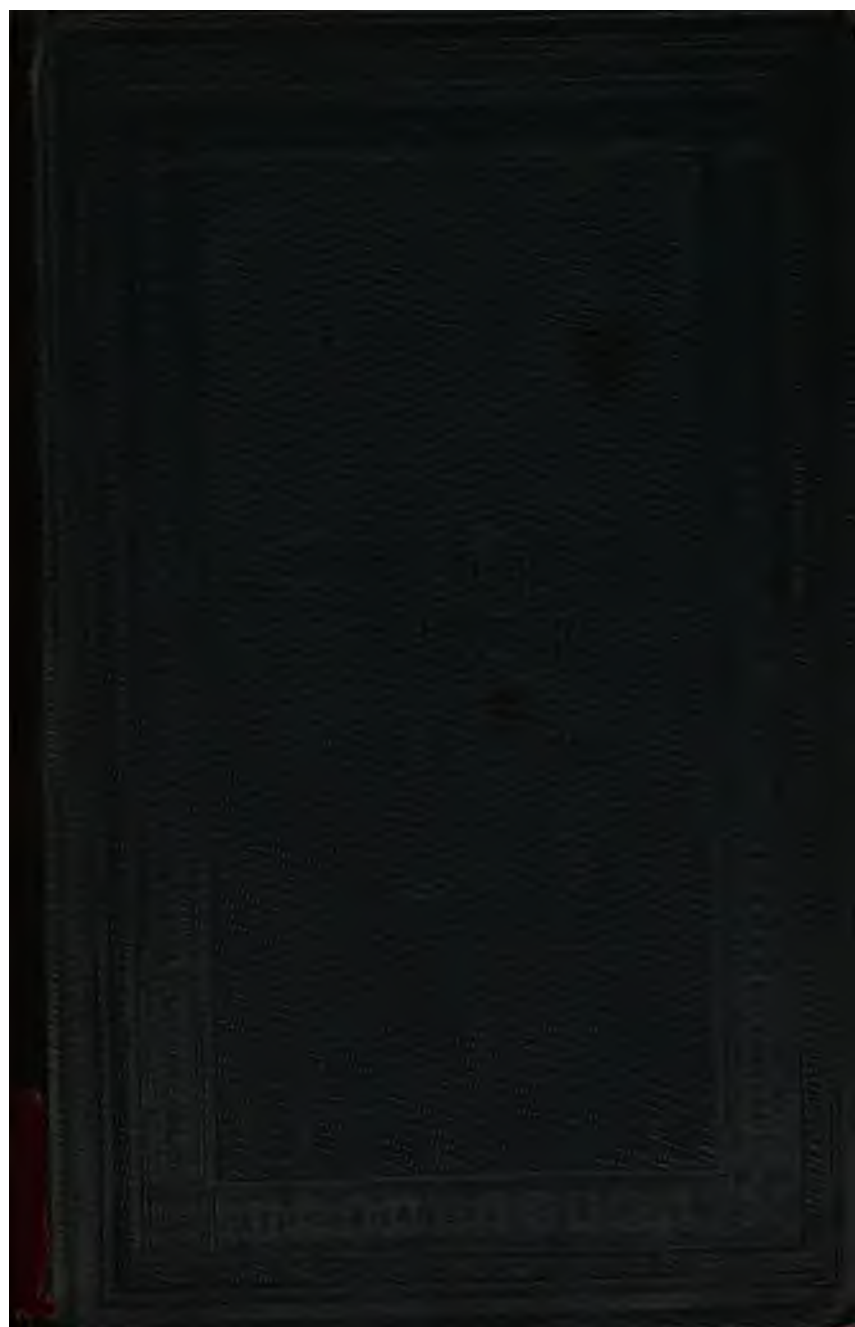
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ATTAINMENT OF A GOOD STYLE OF WRITING.

WITH

An Historical Sketch of the English Language

AND BRIEF

REMARKS ON ITS NATURE AND GENIUS.

INTENDED FOR THE HIGHER CLASSES IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

BY

G. F. GRAHAM,

AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH, OR THE ART OF COMPOSITION;"

"HELPS TO ENGLISH GRAMMAR;"

&c. &c. &c.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS, & ROBERTS.

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P R E F A C E.

It would appear a paradox that, though works on the English language are generally received with favour by the public, the study of composition should make little or no progress in our educational institutions. But it is certainly true, that few of our grammar schools for boys have yet made English a distinct subject of attention ; and where it is admitted, the study is pursued in so desultory and imperfect a manner, that it produces but little fruit. In those ladies' schools, indeed, where any pretensions are made to impart sound general knowledge, English composition holds a more prominent place ; but even there, it is not always regularly studied, and is frequently given only as an occasional exercise.

The recent exposures of the ignorance of candidates for the diplomatic service, in the very rudiments of their own language, and other branches of elementary education, would sufficiently war-

rant any one in the attempt to supply a partial remedy for such a state of things; and, in the hope of contributing to the furtherance of so desirable an object, the writer offers the present work to the consideration of the public.

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DIRECTIONS TO THE TEACHER.

As words are the materials of language, every course of this study should begin with an investigation of their nature and use. *The various senses and applications of words* are therefore the first lessons in the following pages.

When the learner has acquired sufficient knowledge of this part of the subject, *he should proceed to form propositions*; that is, to use words of a known meaning in writing simple assertions. This exercise should be continued till an exact knowledge of the nature, parts, and forms of propositions has been attained, and the learner can write and explain them without difficulty.

The three forms of the proposition being well understood, the next point for consideration is *the study of sentences*. Many beginners have no lack of ideas, but for want of practice in various forms of expression, they are often utterly at a loss. They have the thought, but have no power of expressing it. To remove this difficulty, it is an excellent practice to take some form of sentence from any standard writer, and, adopting it as a model, to write several sentences, similarly constructed, on a variety of subjects. These exercises on structures of sentences will give the learner facility of expression, and, if performed

carefully, will soon relieve him from any difficulty under this head.

The definition will next occupy his attention. It has been said, that even the best definitions are arbitrary, and that there are few of them to which some objection may not be raised. Though this may be true, it cannot, on the other hand, be denied that the practice of defining is very useful to the learner. It induces a desire of investigation; gives him a habit of analysing—of endeavouring to discover every idea contained in any given single term, and, so far, is a very salutary discipline for the mind. It is not necessary, however, that this part of the study be too strongly insisted on, or that it occupy too much of the learner's time. At any future period of the course the practice of defining will be found useful as an occasional exercise. But the teacher should satisfy himself that the learner perfectly understands the cautions against errors in defining; that is, the reasons why certain forms of definition are inadmissible.

The next division of the study is the subject of *argument*. With some this is a very formidable exercise. They have, comparatively, but little difficulty in expressing an opinion; but when called upon to support it, they are frequently much puzzled. The various exercises on sources of argument to which the reader is referred in Part III., will be of use to the learner in this particular, and, it is hoped, will assist in removing this obstacle to his progress. The teacher should be careful not to exact too much matter from a beginner. If a general assertion be supported by two or three sentences, the exercise should, at first, be considered sufficiently long. It is injudicious to discourage the learner. Some are very slow of perception, and have but

little natural power of invention ; and this is, no doubt, one cause why young people are generally so reluctant to study composition. Every means should be adopted which may give the beginner confidence in his own powers ; and the greatest care should be taken that his early exercises be not beyond his strength.

Having gone through the exercises on arguments, the pupil will be then prepared *to write on a subject*. Here one should be selected which is suited to his particular powers ; a question which will naturally depend upon circumstances, and which must, consequently, be left to the teacher's discretion. It will be observed that these subjects (see Part IV.) are classified under various heads ; but it is not necessary that they should be written in the order in which they are arranged in the book. As a general rule, it is better that the learner should not write too often on the same species of subject. He should vary from the moral to the literary, practical, or historical, and occasionally recur to a narrative, or a description. The variety of subject may relieve the study of some of its difficulty, and give encouragement to the learner. Practice in writing will also assist in showing him that the power of composing is not, as some imagine, a peculiar gift, bestowed only upon some few favoured mortals, but one which any one of common sense and ordinary understanding may acquire by steady and careful attention. It is recommended, however, that, at first, the proposed subject be discussed between the teacher and scholar before the latter make any attempt at composition.

In every composition of the learner, it should be particularly insisted on that none of its parts be wanting ; in other words, that there should be, in all cases, an introduction, an opinion, arguments in support of the opinion, and a conclusion. There may be cases in which especial

difficulty will be found with some particular parts; but on no account should the learner be allowed to fall into the habit of producing an exercise deficient in any of them. He must be made to understand that in every piece of writing there should be the same proportion of parts as in any other piece of art, and that the absence of any one of these will give an imperfect and distorted effect to his composition. Each of the numbered divisions (see Part IV. p. 121) is intended to furnish matter for a distinct paragraph, so that the paragraphs in every theme may equal in number those given in the sketch. The double subject is intended still further to exercise the learner's powers both of reasoning and expression.

The other chapters in this work, on style, sentences, figurative language, &c., are to be read attentively by the pupil, and commented on by the teacher, the questions referring to each division being made use of for this purpose.

ENGLISH STYLE.

PART I.

IDEAS, WORDS, AND PROPOSITIONS.

INTRODUCTION.

IDEAS.

EVERY one knows that when he sees an object for the first time (suppose a horse or a stone), a certain impression is made on his mind by the sight of it. The eye is the organ or instrument by which this communication is made between the object (here, the horse or the stone) and the mind.

A similar effect takes place in the case of sound.

1/ An impression, different from the one above mentioned, is here also made, but through another medium, — viz., the ear. The barking of a dog, the notes of a melody, the moaning of the wind, the creaking of a door, &c., are among the means by which impressions of this kind are received.

Just in the same way, and by similar means, impressions are conveyed to the mind through the organ of smelling. By bringing a sweet-scented flower within a certain distance of the nerves of the nose,

scientifically called the olfactory, the mind is agreeably affected.

The organ of taste, placed in the tongue and palate, enables us to distinguish between what is agreeable or disagreeable as an article of food ; and its functions are chiefly confined to such objects as are fit for our bodily nourishment.

Different impressions, again, are conveyed by the sense of touching, which is not confined to any particular organ, but is diffused over the whole body. The qualities heat, cold, roughness, smoothness, hardness, softness, &c., are conveyed to the mind through this channel.

Of these various impressions, some are agreeable, and others the reverse ; but they are all made respectively, by the means above mentioned. It should also be observed, that in all of these cases, although the person affected must be in some communication with the object which causes the impression, the distance differs in the operation of the different senses. In the cases of touching and tasting, the objects must be in actual contact with the organs. In smelling, the effect may be produced by not quite so close a proximity of the object. In hearing, it may be produced at a still greater distance ; whilst in seeing, we are brought into communication with objects many miles off.

Now, the impressions thus made on the mind by means of the senses are called "*ideas*;"¹ so that by

¹ The English word "*idea*" comes from the Greek *ιδέα*, the form or external appearance of anything. The Greek word itself is a derivative from *ιδεῖν*, "to see ;" and in a philosophical sense signifies a mental representation of an object.

the "idea" of an object, or action, we understand simply the impression made by that object or action upon the mind. We must also remember that these impressions are not confined to the time in which they are making; but that we have the power of recalling them at pleasure: thus, when we see a tree, hear a tune, or smell a flower, the ideas conveyed are not only impressed at the time, but can be brought back to our minds when the causes of them are no longer present.

Words have been called "the signs of our ideas." By this is meant that a certain combination of letters, when pronounced or written, represents a certain idea for which it has been agreed that it shall stand. But this agreement is only conventional — not necessary: any other combination of letters, when once determined on, and universally accepted, would equally well answer the purpose. Indeed, this is obviously true, when we consider that the same combination of letters does not *with all men* represent the same idea. Thus it has been agreed upon in England, that a certain idea shall be represented by the word *house*. In France, however, the combination which represents the same idea is *maison*; in Italy, it is *casa*; in Germany, *Haus*; thus differing in different languages.

But though words are signs, they are very imperfect and incomplete signs of our ideas; for they by no means describe extensively or accurately all the objects, actions, or qualities for which they stand. For example, the word *tree* will, when written or pronounced, recall a certain idea generally; but neither particularly nor individually: it will bring to mind a

substance growing up out of the earth, and having a trunk, branches, and leaves; but the word will, of itself, give us no information as to its height, size, colour, age, species, and many other particulars.

Again, the term "*good*" conveys, generally, a favourable impression, but leaves us quite uninformed as to whether it refers to manners, skill, intellectual power, morality, or religion; for the expression, "*a good man*," may mean a good (skilful) workman, a good (acute) logician, a good (kind) father, or a good (pious) Christian, &c.

Lastly, the word *strike* gives us a general idea of a very common action; but leaves us wholly in the dark as to the agent, degree, time, &c., of that action. All this information we must gather from other sources.

Hence it will appear that words require analysing and explaining, and this from the very imperfection of their nature. Our ideas are, in fact, in a great majority of cases, complex; that is, in the contemplation of any object, action, or quality, the whole idea is made up of various parts, all of which cannot be described by the one word.

CONCRETE AND ABSTRACT TERMS.

The most comprehensive classification of words is into *concrete*¹ and *abstract*.²

¹ "Concrete," derived from the Latin *concretus*, literally signifies "united in growth." The word is applied to all those ideas which represent material substances, the particles of which are united so as to form a solid mass.

² "Abstract" is from the Latin *abstractus*, the participle of the verb *abstrahere*, and literally means "drawn from."

Concrete ideas are those which first enter the mind, and they are derived either from material objects, external actions, or the qualities belonging to them; that is, from such things as can be felt, actions seen, or qualities perceived by the senses. All words representing such ideas are termed "*concrete*." The noun "man," the verb "strike," and the adjective "long," are commonly used in a concrete sense.

ABSTRACTION.

But the human mind has the power of taking away, or abstracting, any one quality from an object of sense, and considering it apart from all others which may belong to that object, or apart from the object itself. This faculty of the mind is called abstraction, and the ideas of the qualities thus drawn off (or abstracted) are called abstract. Thus, as above said, the word "man" is the general sign of a concrete idea; but if, in contemplating the object "man," we choose to consider his *strength* apart from all his other qualities;—or his *grace* alone—or his *height* alone, exclusively of all other considerations, we then abstract, or draw away, these qualities from the "man." The ideas of such qualities are called abstract ideas, and the words which represent them are called abstract.

EXERCISE I.

Copy out the words marked in italics in the following sentences, putting all the concrete terms in one column, and all the abstract in another.

The *horse* is an *animal* of great *strength*—What is the *value* of that *watch*?—The *book* was elegantly bound in blue *cloth*—*Julius Cæsar* was noted for his *generosity*—The little boy's *lameness* hindered his walking as fast as his *companions*—I had an *opportunity* of looking him steadily in the *face*—*Industry* and *regularity* are the surest *means* of *wealth*—The *attitude* of European *affairs* was then very threatening—Immense and furious was the *crowd* of *pursuers*—The *cardinal* had attained to great *eminence*—He was an eloquent *preacher*, and his *instructions* were touching and impressive—He was, in every *sense*, the greatest *sovereign* of the *age*—This *writer* was the *poet* of the *people*—*Virtue* is its own *reward*.

EXERCISE II.

Change the words in italics in the following sentences into their corresponding abstract nouns.

This *difficult* exercise puzzles me—Every one admired the *learned* man—The *severe* weather has made us ill—The *long* journey fatigued me—I was enchanted with the *beautiful* scenery—They were much pleased with his *lively* conversation—Persons of good taste prefer *simple* nature to *embellished* art—The whole party was saved by the *brave* soldiers—All are attracted by her *modest* deportment—The *high* tree was measured—He is a *very strong* man—These *true* words made a deep impression—They interrupted the *merry* party—It is necessary to be *temperate*—Nothing can be done without *persevering*—*Not to know* these things is shameful—The boy declared *he was innocent*—The *proud* man was

humbled—This *curious* boy will be punished—*To obey* our superiors is commanded us—*To be patient* under misfortunes is extremely difficult—The *barbarous* tyrant was detested—All admired the *sublime* poet—The *humane* governor was praised—*To say nothing* is often commendable—The boy showed *himself grateful*—I quite approve of your *being kind* to your companions—The mother expressed *herself anxious* about her children's welfare.

GENERALISATION.

There is another power of the mind connected with abstraction, which is yet to be distinguished from it; viz., generalisation. These two terms are often confounded, and it is therefore of consequence that we should understand the difference between them. Generalisation depends upon abstraction; for, without the latter the former could not be performed. For example, when in thinking on any one object, such as a tree, we consider it as regards its age alone, or its height, or form, or any other of its qualities, in each and all of these cases we perform abstraction.

But when any one, contemplating a number of individual objects, observes that they all possess certain qualities in common, and, in consequence of this observation, he gives them a name which applies equally to them all—this is to generalise.¹

¹ "Generalisation" is derived from the Latin *generalis*; and this again from *genus*, a class. To generalise is to reduce particulars to their genera, or classes.

In abstraction, we contemplate but one quality of an object at a time, excluding for that time the consideration of all its other qualities. In generalising, we contemplate several objects together, and observing that they all agree in certain particulars, we make a class (or *genus*) of them, and call them all by the same name. It is then evident that we can abstract without generalising, but that we cannot generalise without abstracting.

COMMON NAMES.

It is upon this principle that are formed what are called common terms, or, in grammar, common nouns. In consequence of their agreeing in a certain number of particulars (or having certain qualities in *common*) a large class of objects received the same name. Thus, when we meet with a building constructed with walls, and having a roof to shelter its inmates from the inclemency of the weather, we call such a thing "a house," without attending to the almost infinite variety which is well known to exist among such objects. For though we all know that no two houses agree in every particular, as long as they are found to agree in a certain number of circumstances, they will all be called by the same general term—house. Now, it is clear that this process of generalisation could not have been performed without the power of abstraction; for it is in consequence of abstracting, in each case, the same qualities from these objects, that we find them to agree in possessing such qualities.

PROPER NAMES.

Proper names, on the other hand, are applied, not to a class or number of objects agreeing in certain particulars, but to single individuals. Whenever I meet with a large stream of water flowing into a sea or lake, I call such an object a "river," because it agrees in these particulars with a large class of things. But if I wish to designate that individual river which flows by London, and falls into the German Ocean, I must apply the term *Thames*. The use of this, and of all other proper names, is to distinguish an individual object from all others of its class.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SENSES.

Most words may be used in two, and some in three senses; but in all cases there is a connection between the first or primary meaning, and the secondary signification. These senses may be classed as primary (or concrete), and secondary (abstract, or metaphorical). Some English words, however, are not found in a secondary sense, and others have only an abstract signification, having lost their original concrete sense. Lastly, some words are used in two senses, both concrete. For example, the word "head," in the expression "my head aches," is used in its original concrete sense. In the sentence, "The boy is at the *head* of his class," it has a secondary, abstract meaning; whereas, in the line, "The mountain lifts his *head* above the storm," it is applied in a metaphorical sense.

EXERCISE III.

Take out the words in italics in the following sentences, and explain in what sense they are respectively used.

He was *moved* to tears—The waters *subsided*—There is a *rise* in the price of bread—The patient was too ill *to be moved*—The leaves were *agitated* by the wind—The mother *kissed* her child—"The wind *did kiss* the trees"—The master *threatened* to dismiss the apprentice—The clouds *threaten* rain—The army *advanced* into the *heart* of the country—My uncle was *agitated* at this news—He was a *steady* boy—My cousin is *quick* at learning—This happened in the *course* of yesterday afternoon—He was eager in the *pursuit* of literature—The horse ran over the *course*—My brother is much *advanced* in his studies—He was killed in the *pursuit* of the French from Waterloo.

Many words are used in two senses, *both concrete*; the one, however, derived from the other: for example,—

Primary.

He had not the free use of
his *hand*.
The boy hurt his *foot*.

Secondary.

The minute-*hand* of my
watch is broken.
He sat at the *foot* of the tree.

In the first column, the words *hand* and *foot* are used in their primary sense; in the second, they are applied in a secondary, but yet a concrete, signification.

EXERCISE IV.

Use each of the following words in two senses, in separate sentences, similar to the examples above given.

roof	heart	mouth	side
leaf	back	arm	volume
leg	brow	branch	table
eye	lip	chest	blade
wing	neck	bed	body.
face	tooth	drum	

EXERCISE V.

Use the following words in two senses:—1st, a concrete, and 2nd, an abstract sense: for example,—

Concrete.

The boy's wound was *inflamed*.
The men *reaped* the corn.

Abstract.

The orator *inflamed* the populace.
They *reaped* the fruits of their industry.

reflect	sound	see	shine
field	stroke	warmth	brilliant
stain	feel	burn	bury
sweet	ripe	bitter	polished
sharpen	revive	elevated	deep
strong	view	conceal	support.

ANALOGY.¹

It may be useful and interesting to inquire into the cause of this secondary meaning of words,—how it happened that they acquired a new meaning distinct from their original sense, and yet, in a certain way, derived from it. The phenomenon may be thus explained. It depends upon, and may be

¹ The word "analogy" is derived from the Greek verb *ἀναλέγω*, "I gather up, or consider together." Analogy is the power of collecting and comparing relations.

attributed to, a principle called analogy. This term refers to a certain power of the mind, by which we compare ideas resembling each other, not in all, but only in some respects, or in the relation they bear to other ideas. When we use the word "move," in its original meaning, it signifies to cause some body to change its position ; as when we say, "the stone was *moved*." But when we say that "such a one was *moved* to tears by this news," the meaning of the word is secondary. The change implied in the first sense does not, in the second, refer to external matter, but to internal feeling. There is here an analogy or a comparison, as regards circumstances. The power applied in the first case holds the same relation to the stone that the news received, in the second, holds to the person affected by it.

EXERCISE VI.

Explain in writing the analogies by which the words in the list under Exercise IV. came to be used in a secondary sense ; somewhat in the following manner.

Example.

The word "leg," in its original and literal sense, signifies the limb which assists in sustaining the weight of the body. But this term is also applied, in a secondary sense, to those parts of mechanical contrivances which perform a similar office. Thus, we speak of the "leg" of a chair, table, or stool ; and in all these cases, the leg stands in the same relation to the chair, table, &c., as the leg of an animal does to its body.

PROPOSITIONS.

Words, taken singly, express ideas ; but in order to *think*, we must put ideas together. A *thing* is derived from *to think* ; it is, in fact, whatever makes us think ; and it is pretty clear that, were there no *things*, we could not think.

Therefore, whenever we think, we must think about some thing or person.

This thing, or person, is called the *subject* of our thought.¹

Whatever we say (or write) about the subject is called the *predicate* (which means " what is declared or asserted ").²

But it is necessary to show that this predicate belongs to the subject ; and for this purpose the *copula* is used.³

The word " copula," means a link or chain. It is, really, always some part of the verb " to be," and it is employed to join the predicate to the subject.

These three parts, the subject, copula, and predicate, when put together, form a proposition ⁴, a word which means "*an opinion laid down*," for example :—

¹ " Subject " comes from the Latin *subjacere*, " to cast, or put down." The word here means whatever is " put down," concerning which an assertion is to be made.

² " Predicate " is derived from *prædicare*, " to speak out, or proclaim."

³ *Copula*, the Latin for a tie or band ; from *copulare*, " to couple."

⁴ The term " proposition " is from the Latin *proponere* ; composed of *pro*, before, and *ponere*, to place. It is an affirmation " placed before " us, or laid down for our consideration.

1. The Grass ^{subj. cop. pred.} is green (a proposition).
2. The dog ^{subj. c. pred.} barks (a proposition).
3. The pen ^{subj. cop. pred.} was mended (a proposition).

In the first of these propositions, the subject is "*grass*;" the predicate *green* (what is declared of grass); and the copula, *is*, holds them together.

In the second, *the dog* is the subject; and *barks* is both the copula and the predicate; for it not only asserts something of the dog, but also shows that he exists or "*is*."

In the third, *the pen* is the subject; *was* the copula; and *mended* the predicate.

Propositions are of three kinds: 1. Enunciative. 2. Active, and 3. Passive.

1. A proposition is enunciative when the predicate expresses the *mere state* or *condition* of the subject.

2. A proposition is active when the subject is represented as *doing* something.

3. A proposition is passive when the subject is represented as *acted on*, or *having something done to it*.

Of the above propositions, "*grass is green*" is an enunciative form: it simply declares that the subject (*grass*) is in a certain condition expressed by the predicate (*green*); but it does not assert that the subject either acts or is acted on.

The second is an active form of proposition; for it declares that the subject (*the dog*) does something (*barks*).

The third is a passive form: it shows that the subject (*the pen*) received an action, or had something done to it (*mended*).

EXERCISE VII.

State to which of these three forms the following propositions belong.

The boy is attentive — The chair was broken — He writes — The girl is clever — The affair was settled — This is an excellent work — I am much pleased — The man refused to help us — She is in a hurry — Cæsar was an illustrious general — The woman deserves great praise — You have made a mistake — The passage was made in ten days — The general marched against the enemy — She has great discretion — The account was published — Leonidas was a hero — The child cries — This affair is of no importance — This writer achieved a vast reputation — Justice is the queen of virtues — Louis XII. was called the father of his people — All were invited to subscribe — The best portion of this work is the introduction — The colouring is gaudy — His style is wonderfully concise — Patriotism is the source of his inspiration — This picture of emigrant life is graphic and impressive — The book is well executed, and to younger readers we can recommend it as a work which they will be glad to add to their libraries.

EXERCISE VIII.

Write eighteen propositions, consisting only of their three parts; viz., the subject, copula, and predicate:— six of them to be enunciative, six active, and six passive, like the following examples:—

Enunciative.

The paintings are beautiful.
 This garden is large.
 The streets are wet.

His mother will be angry.
 My aunt was kind.
 The night is dark.

Active.

The women exclaimed.
 The boys were talking.
 I was reading.
 He wrote a letter.
 The man shivered.
 The master had explained.

Passive.

The book was hidden.
 The question will be discussed.
 The bread is baked.
 The snow was melted.
 The houses were built.
 They will be protected.

COMPOUND SUBJECTS.

Subjects of propositions often consist of several words, as "*To rise early* is conducive to health." Here the subject is not "to rise," but to "rise early."

EXERCISE IX.

Use the following expressions as subjects of propositions.

To be just in all our dealings — To compose elegantly — The habit of writing — To combat his arguments — Walking before breakfast — Sketching from Nature — To play without quarrelling — To write a foreign language accurately — A friend of mine — One of the noblest of Christian virtues — All the ship's guns — The companions of our childhood — Some of his adherents — This glorious news — Very accurate experiments — King John of France — The habit of reading by candle-light — Collecting antiquities — These sensible remarks — Persons born deaf — Many well-known specimens of this sort of literature — The best way to succeed.

COMPOUND PREDICATES.

Predicates of propositions also are frequently not expressed by a single term, but consist of several words, as : "The affair is *of importance*."

EXERCISE X.

Use the following expressions as predicates of propositions.

At home—Not far off—In the garden—A state of pilgrimage—Wrapped in his cloak—Quite aware of his purpose—Not much better—Plunged in a deep reverie—Far from being of the same opinion—Under the necessity of refusing—In good health—Wholly without assistance—in great fear of the consequences—A man of reserved habits—In doubt as to the result—In a terrible passion—Unequal to the task—In great confusion—In considerable danger.

COMPLEMENTS.¹

All expressions which are added to a proposition are called its *complements*.

The word "complement" means that which fills up, or completes, the sense of a proposition.

In the proposition, "The boy was reproved," the sense is perfectly intelligible; but when we say, "The *idle* boy was *sternly* reproved *by his master*," we have much fuller information; for the sort of boy, the manner of the reproof, and the person who reproved,

¹ "Complement" is derived from the Latin verb *complere*, "to fill up or complete."

are all made known to us. It will then be understood that when we have discovered the subject, copula, and predicate, in sentences containing but one proposition, all the other words or expressions in that sentence are complements to that proposition.

EXERCISE XI.

Copy out the following sentences, and point out all their parts, thus—

complement. subject. complement.

{ (Last night), the old *tree* (at the bottom of our garden) }

cop. predicate. complement.

{ *was blown down* (by the violence of the wind). }

Music and song were early cultivated among the Hebrews. Fables are undoubtedly of great antiquity. During this age, poetry was feeble and mechanical. Cicero's moral character was never blemished by the stain of any habitual vice. As a step towards this end, Wallenstein now demanded the cession of Mecklenburgh. Both Badajoz and San Sebastian were set on fire by their French garrisons, as a means of defence. That work must have been very tedious for one man to execute. Their proficiency excited universal admiration. I have before referred to this custom. The same thing was enjoined by the council of Pavia. There is another point referred to in this extract. The custom of reading at meals was not exclusively monastic.

Classification of Complements.

Complements may be classified as referring to

circumstance, time, place, manner, object, agent, person, qualification, intention, thus :—

1. *Of circumstance* ; as, “ *Though surrounded with difficulties*, the king effected his escape.”

2. *Of time* ; as, “ The Norman Conquest of England took place *about the middle of the eleventh century*.”

3. *Of place* ; as, “ A revolution broke out *in France*.”

4. *Of manner* ; as, “ The governor read the proclamation *with a calm and steady voice*.”

5. *Of the object* ; as, “ He determined *to investigate this matter*.”

6. *Of the agent* ; as, “ The book was brought home *by the printer's boy*.”

7. *Of the person* ; as, “ John gave *his brother* a penknife, as a New Year's gift.”

8. *Of qualification* ; as, “ The *contented* man is happy.”

9. *Of intention* ; as, “ I went out *to purchase some books*.”

Explanation.

In No. 1. of the above propositions, the expression “ *though surrounded with difficulties* ” shows *the circumstances* in which the king was when he effected his escape.

In No. 2. “ *about the middle of the eleventh century* ” informs us of *the time* when the Conquest took place.

In No. 3. “ *in France* ” expresses *the place* where the revolution in question broke out.

In No. 4. “ *with a calm and steady voice* ” shows *the manner* in which the proclamation was read.

In No. 5. "to investigate the matter" is *the object* of his determination.¹

In No. 6. "by the printer's boy" shows *the agent* or person who acted on the occasion.¹

In No. 7. "his brother" expresses *the person* receiving the object of the verb.

In No. 8. the term "contented" *qualifies* the subject "man."

In No. 9. the expression "to purchase some books" shows *the intention* with which I went out.

EXERCISE XII.

Complements of Circumstance.

Let the learner use the following complements of circumstance in propositions of his own composing.

Having settled this matter to our satisfaction —
Being in doubt as to the result — In the deepest anguish of mind — Full of hope — Tormented with raging thirst — Being well acquainted with the subject — Being ignorant of his rank and condition — Without the means of procuring food for his children — The inmates of the house being in a deep sleep — Speaking the language fluently — In this dreadful emergency — Thus situated — Having received no tidings of their friend, &c.

EXERCISE XIII.

Complements of Time.

The following complements of time are to be introduced into propositions of the learner's composing.

¹ The complement of the object can be used only after an active, and the complement of the agent only after a passive form, of proposition.

Next morning — Last night — In the course of the week — Before the end of the holidays — In the tenth century — To-morrow afternoon — On my arrival at the inn — In all my life — During the ceremony — After breakfast — The next day — On the meeting of Parliament — Before the beginning of spring — During the summer months — On the first of September, &c.

EXERCISE XIV.

Complements of Place.

Use the following complements of place in written propositions.

In the Northern parts of Europe — Not far from the house — At the foot of the mountain — In the bed of the river — Close to the fountain — Seated in an harbour — Near the town — In a corner of the library — At some distance from the village — In this country — Five miles further on — Outside the walls — Within the city — In the Southern States of America — Beyond this point — In many provinces — On the equator — In this spot, &c,

EXERCISE XV.

Complements of Manner.

Introduce the following complements of manner into propositions.

With the greatest kindness — In a haughty tone — With the utmost caution — In a conciliating spirit — Very politely — With violence — With great reluctance — By degrees — With expression — In an audible voice — Unconsciously — In silence — With a

heartly appetite — Providentially — In the same way — By these means — In this manner — Without doubt — Without difficulty — Universally — Without delay.

EXERCISE XVI.

*Complements of the Object.*¹

Use the following complements of the object in written propositions.

To obtain a view of the palace — Large manufactories — Many works on the subject — To improve his mind — Every member of the family — The enemy's forces — This difficult question — Many histories — A large library — To undertake the expedition — His father's long letter — The cause of the clergy — The power of steam — The hand of Providence — To lose no time — A large fortune — The first page of that book, &c.

EXERCISE XVII.

*Complements of the Agent.*²

The following complements of the agent are to be used in written propositions, as in the above exercises.

By the violence of the wind — By my uncle's manservant — By the executors of the estate — By four beautiful horses — By the speaker — By my youngest sister — By a celebrated artist — By all the clerks — By most of the inhabitants — By the cattle — By the

¹ As the complement of the object can be used only after the active form, all the propositions of this exercise must be active.

² All the propositions in Exercise XVII. must be passive.

best authors — By a skilful workman — By the council of the nation — By the railway directors — By a large Newfoundland dog — By my cousin, &c.

EXERCISE XVIII.

*Complements of the Person.*¹

Use the following complements of the person in written propositions.

To my friend — For the workmen — His brother — To his agent — All his supporters — The public — The school-boys — For the master — The patient — To the messenger — The traveller — The weary soldier — For the stranger — To his children — For himself — To the admiral of the channel fleet — The landlord — To his fellow-townsmen — To all the shopkeepers in the town — To his father, &c.

EXERCISE XIX.

Add to the following given propositions, complements of time, place, person, or object.

Example.

(comp. time.)	subject.	cop. pred.	comp. per.
At that moment,	<i>the captain</i>	<i>commanded</i>	(his men)
comp. object.			
(to charge the enemy).			

The king ordered — The mother told — The master desired — My friend bought — He wished — His

¹ The complement of the person (receiving) is mostly used after verbs signifying to give or to tell : as, offer, present, send, inform, mention, write, buy, purchase, relate, &c.

daughter related — His brother informed — The prince conferred — The magistrate spoke — The witness gave — The gentleman sent — They mentioned — The servant brought — The carrier took — The man presented — My sister will write — The general commanded, &c.

EXERCISE XX.

To the following given propositions add complements of circumstance, manner, place, or agent, &c.

Example.

complement of circumstance.		subject.	cop.
(In this disturbed state of affairs,)		<i>the coasts</i>	<i>were</i>
comp. man.	predic.	complement of place.	
(strictly)	<i>guarded</i>	(in every part of the island)	
complement agent.			
(by large bodies of soldiery).			

A messenger was despatched — The proclamation was read — The ships were towed — Bread is sold — A letter will be sent — A communication was made — A sermon was preached — The way was cleared — The doctor was consulted — A fire was lighted — The tree was felled — The Exhibition was opened — The prisoner was locked up — The dinner was served — Coals are bought — The pen was mended — The country was inundated — The dinner was served — The room will be papered — Some visitors were announced, &c.

COMPLEMENTARY PROPOSITIONS.

Propositions used as Complements.

Propositions themselves are often used as complements. In this view, they may be considered as 1. Introductory; 2. Determinative; and 3. Explanatory.

Examples.

1. After ^{comp. proposition.}he had examined the witnesses,
^{principal proposition.}THE MAGISTRATE REMANDED the prisoner for a week.
2. ^{principal prop.}HE SHOWED me the books ^{comp. prop.}you spoke of.
3. The ^{prin.}SUN, ^{complementary proposition.}which had been obscured during the
^{proposition.}whole morning, now BURST FORTH with unusual splendour.

Explanation.

In the first of the above sentences, the leading proposition is "the magistrate remanded;" and the complementary proposition, introductory to the principal, is "he had examined."

In the second sentence, the proposition "you spoke of" determines the books in question, and is therefore called determinative.

In the third, "the sun burst forth" is the principal; and "which had been obscured," inserted

between its parts, explains something connected with the other proposition.

EXERCISE XXI.

The learner is required to point out the principal and the complementary propositions in the following sentences; also, to distinguish between the determinative and the explanatory forms in each of them.

ANALYSIS.

Forms of Sentences.

1. Soon after we arrived here, a report was spread that the duke and his suite were daily expected.

2. No one can conceive with what pleasure I revisited these scenes.

3. The district where most of their town-houses stood lies between the city and the regions which are now considered as fashionable.

4. When the lands of the vanquished people were at length divided, the nobles despised the subjects too much to court their assistance in periods of danger.

5. How far this change ought to be lamented is not now a point of great dispute.

6. The Roman laws, though corrupted, were, in general, the best that human wisdom had framed.

7. The Roman arts and literature, though they had greatly declined, were still superior to anything found among rude nations.

8. The first London Coffee-house was set up, in the time of the Commonwealth, by a Turkey merchant, who had acquired among the Mahometans a taste for their favourite beverage.

9. All Europe had shuddered at the atrocious and prolonged cruelty with which Damiens, who had attempted the life of Louis in 1757, was executed.

10. The proud spirit of Charles could not submit to a rigour that had never been exercised against any of his predecessors.

11. The future proceedings of the parliament, if a fanatical junto entirely under the direction of the army can deserve that honourable name, were worthy of the members who composed it.

12. But while this monarch persecuted the French Protestants, in opposition to all the principles of humanity and sound policy, he was no dupe to the Court of Rome.

FORMS OF SENTENCES FOR IMITATION.

EXERCISE XXII.

The learner is to write sentences constructed like the following models :—

FIRST MODEL.

[Subject qualified—passive proposition—time—place
—agent.]

Examples.

1. This beautiful nosegay was bought in Covent Garden yesterday afternoon by my brother.

2. The art of printing was invented in Germany, about the year 1445, by Guttemberg of Mainz.

3. A great sensation was produced in the House of Commons last night, by the speech of a new member, &c.

SECOND MODEL.

[A passive, followed by an active proposition (a consequence of the former), the two connected by the words "so" or "such," and "that."]

Examples.

1. The king was *so* displeased with this conduct of the parliament, *that* he refused positively to give his consent to the Bill.

2. The town was defended with *such* vigour by the inhabitants, *that* the hostile army soon abandoned the enterprise in despair.

3. Their cause was pleaded *so* eloquently by the advocate, *that* the prisoners felt sure of their immediate acquittal.

THIRD MODEL.

[Principal subject (inserted complementary explanatory proposition), principal copula and predicate ||conjunction||, second proposition (subject understood), complement, &c.]

Examples.

1. The young marquis, who had been entered at King's College, Cambridge, was seized with the small-pox, and died at the early age of sixteen.

2. This terrible disaster, which filled the whole nation with alarm, was after all productive of no serious consequences, and served but to render the government more on the alert for the future.

3. The war, which had been protracted to an unusual length, languished for a few years longer, and was at length brought to a close by the Treaty of Westphalia.

EXERCISE XXIII.

The following models are to be imitated in sentences of the pupil's construction :—

FOURTH MODEL.

[An impersonal passive form, beginning with "it" or "there;"—the conjunction "that," followed by a second proposition (subject expressed).]

Examples.

1. It has been often remarked, *that* there is generally a wide difference between the principles and the practice even of the best men.
2. There is no doubt *that* the adoption of this plan would have eventually secured success.
3. It is of the greatest importance *that* we contract our desires to our condition; and, whatever may be our expectations, *that* we should live within the compass of what we actually possess.

FIFTH MODEL.

[Two propositions connected by the conjunction "and," the second being a consequence of the first, and having a different subject.]

Examples.

1. The Marquis of Newcastle, by his extensive influence, had raised a considerable force for the king, and high hopes were entertained of success, from the known loyalty and abilities of that nobleman.
2. Fears were now entertained for the safety of the party, and an expedition was fitted out at the expense

of government, to go in search of the missing navigators.

3. The Spanish commerce, so profitable to England, was cut off, and a great number of vessels fell into the hands of the enemy.

SIXTH MODEL.

- [1. An introductory proposition (a concession);
2. a second proposition (an opinion).]

Examples.

1. Though it would be folly to deny the great talent which the writer has displayed in this work, I am still of opinion that he has utterly failed to establish his theory.

2. However great may be the difficulties to be encountered in this undertaking, you may rest assured that they are not insuperable.

3. Whatever opinion we may entertain of the power of his intellect, no one will venture to assert that he has a strong claim on our respect on the score of his morality.

EXERCISE XXIV.

SEVENTH MODEL.

[Subject—inserted relative clause—copula and predicate, complement ;—a second proposition expressing intention, coupled to the first by the words “that,” or “in order that.”]

Examples.

1. The people, who had long been clamouring for war, organised meetings in all parts of the country,

in order that the public opinion might be clearly expressed upon the subject.

2. The magistrate, who had a strong suspicion of the prisoner's guilt, deferred the examination till the next day, that the police might have more time to collect evidence against him.

3. The minister, who had received secret information of the plot during the night, commanded that the houses of the principal conspirators should be watched, in order that their persons should be arrested on the first opportunity.

EIGHTH MODEL.

[Two propositions, the second being an inference drawn from the first, each having an adjective of the comparative form, preceded by "the."]

Examples.

1. The more we allow indolence to take possession of the soul, the more likely are we to fall into innumerable vices.

2. The older we grow, the more anxiously should we endeavour to fulfil our duties.

3. The longer he remains in such depraved society, the more contaminated will he become, and the less able to rid himself of these pernicious habits.

NINTH MODEL.

[The antithetical sentence. Two propositions, the second of which is in contrast with the first.]

Examples.

1. The brighter hues of colours represent cheerful states of the mind ; whilst the graver or more serious

feelings of our nature may be said to resemble those of a deeper cast.

2. The rapid torrent, or boiling whirlpool, naturally suggests the idea of furious rage; the placid lake, or gliding stream, gentleness of disposition.

3. Yesterday all was bright and beautiful; to-day all is dark and dreary, &c.

EXERCISE XXV.

The following are models for imitation, like those above given :—

TENTH MODEL.

[Several concessions or admissions, — a conclusion.]

Examples.

1. If his moral character be as good as it is represented — if it be proved that his habits are such as will recommend him to this office — and if his knowledge of the subject be sufficiently extensive and accurate — there is every reason to expect that his application will be successful.

2. If the weather should prove fine — if your uncle arrive in time — and if the whole party be in good health, we shall probably start for the Continent on the twelfth of next month.

3. Fully admitting the power of his eloquence, and aware of the extensive knowledge of the subject displayed in his speech, I am still unconvinced by his arguments, and my opinion on this question remains unaltered, &c.

ELEVENTH MODEL.

The explanatory sentence—a proposition followed by others, explaining its meaning.

Examples.

1. Every station has its duties ; from the prince to the peasant, we are all responsible for our actions ; and though our duties differ in the different relations of life, there is no condition exempt from them.

2. Nature does nothing in vain ; the Creator has appointed everything to a certain use and purpose, and determined it to a settled course and sphere of action, from which if it in the least deviates, it becomes unfit to answer those ends for which it was designed.

3. Shakspeare had not the advantage of high birth ; he came to London a needy adventurer, and lived for a time by very mean employments, &c.

TWELFTH MODEL.

The negative sentence :—several negative propositions ; the second, third, &c., explanatory of the first.

Examples.

1. Never had the nation been so prosperous ; never had the middle classes of society been more thriving, or the poor more free from the pressure of privation.

2. No longer do we now perceive the former ardour of the Romans ; no longer do we meet with that firmness in danger, and constancy under reverses, which had for so many ages characterised that extraordinary people.

3. Nothing could have been more ingeniously contrived than this plan ; nothing better calculated to conciliate all parties, and effect the end which its originator had in view.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS ON PART I.

1. What is an idea ?
2. By what means are ideas originally conveyed to the mind ?
3. What is a word ?
4. Do words, of necessity, represent ideas ?
5. In what respect are words imperfect ?
6. Give some examples of words having a variety of meanings.
7. What mean the terms "concrete" and "abstract" ?
8. Explain the power of the mind called "abstraction."
9. What is meant by "generalisation" ?
10. Upon what principle are some nouns called "common" in grammar ?
11. What is the use of proper nouns ?
12. Show the difference between the primary and the secondary meaning of a word.
13. Explain the principle of analogy.
14. Whence is the noun "thing" derived ?
15. What is a proposition ?
16. Of how many, and what parts does a proposition consist ?
17. Explain the meaning of the terms "subject," "copula," and "predicate," as applied to a proposition.
18. Of how many kinds are propositions ?
19. Explain these forms.
20. How may "subjects" be expressed ?
21. What is meant by the term "complement," as applied to a proposition ?
22. Mention some forms of complements.
23. What are complementary propositions ?
24. How may complementary propositions be classified ?
25. How does a determinative differ from an explanatory proposition ?

PART II.

DEFINITIONS, DESCRIPTION, NARRATIVE,
ETC.ON DEFINITIONS.¹

A DEFINITION is the explanation of a word according to certain principles.

Every definition consists of three parts: 1. the subject; 2. the genus; and 3. the species.

1. The *subject* is the word to be defined.

2. The *genus* shows to what class of beings or things the subject belongs.

3. The *species* shows how the subject differs from others of the same genus, thus:

subject.	genus.	species.
(Justice)	is (the virtue)	(of giving to every man his due.)

Here "justice" is the subject defined: the word "virtue" is the genus, that is, it shows to what class

¹ The word "definition" is derived from the Latin verb *definire*, which signifies to lay down the boundary or extent of the meaning of a word.

of things the subject, "justica," belongs : and lastly, "of giving to every man his due" expresses the species of that genus ; it specifies the virtue, and shows how this virtue (justice) differs from other virtues.

The learner must here be cautioned against several errors into which he is likely to fall in writing definitions.

1. *Never define by a single term.*

As every definition must consist of three parts, and as defining a subject by a single term will give but two, to do so is obviously an error. Besides, it may be laid down as a principle that no one word will ever define another. Thus, to say that "courage is fortitude" would be wrong ; for though these terms are very like each other in meaning, they are not identical.

2. *Never define by a negative.*

The reason why a negative definition is faulty, is that in such a case the required information is not given ; as when one would say "courage is not cowardice," or "joy is not sorrow," we are in no way enlightened as to the nature of these subjects ; we are told what they are not, and not what they are ; hence, such a form of definition is faulty and unsatisfactory.

3. *Never define by a derivative.*

It is obviously wrong to use a derivative from the subject in the definition ; for, as the object of a definition is to inform, we clearly defeat our purpose by employing terms of the same etymology as the subject itself. Whoever wishes for a definition of the term "malice," will not gain his end by hearing that it is "a malicious feeling." Again, to define history as 'an historical account of a nation,' would be open to the same objection.

4. *Take care that the definition be neither too extensive nor too narrow.*

If any one should define a horse as "a swift-running quadruped," this definition would be too extensive; as there are many other swift-running quadrupeds, and we might thus confound a horse with a zebra, hare, or fox. Again, if we define a fish as "an animal that has an air-bladder," this would be too narrow a definition, since many fish are without them.

5. *Do not confound an opinion with a definition.*

Many learners fall into this error; they forget that the purpose in defining is to explain the nature of the subject; and instead of so doing, they make some assertion, or express an opinion, about it. Thus, it is wrong to suppose that "history is a useful study," or "patience is a desirable virtue," &c., is a definition.

Lastly, it must be remembered that the terms of the definition must be plainer than the subject defined, or else they will not, in general, explain it. Hence, the more common the subject, the more difficult is it to define, because the more difficult to find terms simpler than the subject itself. Hence, also, it may be observed, that it is useless and unnecessary to define very common words; as an attempt to do so only confuses or obscures our ideas of their meaning.

LESSON I.

Let the learner point out the parts of the following definitions :—

1. Flattery is false praise.
2. Avarice—an excessive desire of wealth.

3. Generosity—an act of self-sacrifice for the benefit of others.

4. Perseverance—a continued determination to overcome difficulties.

5. Procrastination—the habit of delaying our duties.

6. Biography—an account of the lives of celebrated people.

7. Philosophy—an inquiry into the nature and properties of things.

8. Education—the process of training all the mental and bodily powers.

9. A garden—a space enclosed, for the cultivation of fruit, flowers, &c.

10. A day—the space of twenty-four hours.

11. A gallon—a measure containing eight pints.

12. A soldier—one who fights on land for the defence of his country.

REMARKS ON DEFINITIONS.

When, in contemplating a number of subjects, we find them to agree in some one quality, the term that expresses that quality is called a *generic* term; i. e. it represents a whole *genus*, or class of beings or things. Thus: a man, a horse, a dog, a fox, and many others, agree in the quality of possessing life. The word that expresses this quality is "*animal*," and the terms, man, horse, dog, &c., are all included in this genus. Again, under the generic term *tree*, may be ranged, oak, elm, pine, beech, &c. So, the genus *vice* will comprise avarice, gambling, drunkenness, and many others.

LESSON II.

To the following forms add the species, to make up the definition :—

<i>Vice.</i>	<i>State.</i>
Avarice is the vice . . .	Peace is a state . . .
Luxury is the vice . . .	Prosperity is a state . . .
Dishonesty is the vice . . .	Poverty is a state . . .
Drunkenness . . .	War . . .
Gluttony . . .	Happiness . . .
Anger . . .	Melancholy . . .
Falsehood . . .	Excitement . . .
Gambling . . .	Despair . . .

LESSON III.

Complete the definition, as in Lesson II., by the addition of the species :—

<i>Art.</i>	<i>Science.</i>
Music is the art . . .	Geography is the science . . .
Painting is the art . . .	Geology is the science . . .
Poetry is the art . . .	Grammar is the science . . .
Sculpture . . .	Astronomy . . .
Architecture . . .	Geometry . . .
Composition . . .	Mechanics . . .
Printing . . .	Hydrostatics . . .
Writing . . .	Pneumatics . . .

LESSON IV.

Add the species, as before :—

<i>Habit.</i>	<i>Virtue.</i>
Procrastination is the habit . . .	Justice is the virtue . . .
Curiosity is the habit of . . .	Temperance is the virtue . . .
Idleness is the habit of . . .	Fortitude is the virtue . . .
Punctuality . . .	Generosity . . .
Industry . . .	Patience . . .
Perseverance . . .	Obedience . . .
Attention . . .	Resignation . . .
Observation . . .	Humility . . .

LESSON V.

To be worked as the above lessons.

One who (an agent).

A king is one who . . .
 A captain is one . . .
 A general is one . . .
 A magistrate . . .
 A statesman . . .
 A schoolmaster . . .
 A superintendent . . .
 A merchant . . .

A Faculty or power.

The memory is the power of . . .
 The understanding is the faculty of . . .
 The fancy is the faculty . . .
 The imagination . . .
 Reason . . .
 Association . . .
 Abstraction . . .
 Perception . . .

LESSON VI.

Let the learner supply the genus in each of the following propositions :—

Society is the of a number of rational beings.

An insurrection is the against civil authority.

Language is the of ideas by significant sounds.

Sobriety is the of being habitually temperate in the use of spirituous liquors.

Madness is of disordered reason or intellect.

A politician is versed in the science of government.

Gunpowder is a of saltpetre, sulphur, and charcoal.

A market is a where provisions or cattle are exposed for sale.

Grammar is the of speaking and writing a language correctly.

A meadow is appropriated to the production of hay.

A month is the of four weeks.

A helm is the by which a ship is steered.

An orphan is who is deprived of his parents.

Idolatry is the of images.

A plough is used for turning up and breaking the earth.

Ink is a used for writing.

LESSON VII.

Let the learner substitute the subjects for the following definitions, and introduce them into sentences of his own composition :—

1. A representation of natural objects by means of colour, &c.
2. A periodical record of passing events.
3. One who conducts the private correspondence of another.
4. An account of the lives of eminent characters.
5. The power of giving utterance to thought.
6. The sign of an idea.
7. The power of keeping our desires within bounds.
8. The abode of the just in a future life.
9. A man of enormous bulk and stature.
10. A body of troops commanded by a colonel.
11. A machine used for communicating intelligence from a distance by signals.
12. The supreme council of the English nation.

LESSON VIII.

The following words are to be defined, and remarks made upon them by the pupil. Thus :—

subject.	genus.	species.	remarks.
A general is the commander of an army. One who holds this office should possess many high qualities ;			

courage, resolution, knowledge of military tactics, skill in manœuvring, &c. Hannibal, Julius Cæsar, Frederic the Great, Napoleon Bonaparte, and Wellington, were all celebrated generals.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. A dictionary . . . | 13. A sergeant (military) . . . |
| 2. A grammar . . . | 14. A sentence (legal) . . . |
| 3. Harmony . . . | 15. A revolution (political) . . . |
| 4. A minister . . . | 16. A review (literary) . . . |
| 5. Contentment . . . | 17. A pirate . . . |
| 6. A pilgrim . . . | 18. A museum . . . |
| 7. A record . . . | 19. A parish . . . |
| 8. A residence . . . | 20. Economy . . . |
| 9. A catalogue . . . | 21. A monitor . . . |
| 10. A consul . . . | 22. A month . . . |
| 11. A gladiator . . . | 23. A glacier . . . |
| 12. A square (mathematical) . . . | 24. A herald . . . |

DESCRIPTION.

A description differs from a definition ; the latter is merely a general statement of the nature of a subject, whereas the former enters into the particulars by which certain individual persons, places, and things are distinguished from others. Thus, the definition of "man" may be "a rational animal ;" but the description of a man would inform us of the appearance, manners, mental peculiarities, &c., of some one man.

A description needs not contain all the qualities belonging to a subject. Sometimes it may refer only to external appearance—sometimes to moral habits—sometimes to mental faculties or acquirements, &c. Of course, the more of these various qualities it comprises, the more complete will be the description.

To describe well, attention should be directed

chiefly to three points : 1. Begin with the larger divisions, and then go into particulars. 2. Do not make too many subdivisions; and 3. Be careful to choose accurate and appropriate terms.

Before writing a description, it will be well to consider the various parts or divisions of the subject, and to make a list of them in their proper order. This will prevent us from losing sight of any of the necessary parts of the subject, and will serve to render the description more complete. For example, suppose we are required to describe A COUNTRY HOUSE, the following points would have to be considered :—1. The situation. 2. The country in the immediate neighbourhood. 3. The garden, stables, out-houses, &c. 4. The style of building. 5. The entrance-hall. 6. The division or plan of the house. 7. The library and other sitting-rooms. 8. The bedrooms, &c.

It should also be remembered that, in writing a description, it is inexpedient to enter too minutely into details. A sufficient number of these should be introduced to fix the peculiarity of the subject — to bring it vividly before the reader's mental vision; but the broad outlines and striking features are the main points for consideration: they are like the powerful strokes of the painter's brush, which stamp the individuality of the scene, and impress it firmly upon the imagination.

EXAMPLES OF DESCRIPTIONS.

I.

The following is a description of an interior, from Sir Walter Scott's story, "Old Mortality":—

"Upon entering the place of refuge, he found *Balfour* seated on his humble *couch*, with a pocket *Bible* open in his hand, which he seemed to study with intense meditation. His *broadsword*, which he had unsheathed in the first alarm, at the arrival of the dragoons, lay naked across his knees, and the little *taper* that stood beside him on the old *chest*, which served the purpose of a *table*, threw a partial and imperfect *light* upon those stern and harsh *features*, in which ferocity was rendered more solemn and dignified by a wild cast of tragic enthusiasm. His *brow* was that of one in whom some strong o'ermastering principle has overwhelmed all other passions and feelings,—like the swell of a high *spring-tide*, when the usual *cliffs* and *breakers* vanish from the eye, and their existence is only indicated by the chafing *foam* of the waves that burst and wheel over them."

The singular beauty of this passage consists in the truth of the delineation, and the power and skill with which the whole picture is drawn. The words marked in italics are the main features — the materials of the description — and their grouping contributes powerfully to deepen the impression. First, we have Balfour, the principal figure. The couch, the Bible, the broadsword, and the taper, are external accessories, and the reflection of the light upon his features gives the writer an opportunity of revealing the character and feelings, as well as the outward appearance, of the fanatical Puritan. The graceful figure with which the passage closes, renders it one of the most striking and impressive descriptions in the works of this great writer.

II.

The second example is a description of external appearance, extracted from Prescott's "History of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain":—

"King Ferdinand was of the middle *size*. His *complexion* was fresh ; his *eyes* bright and animated ; his *nose* and *mouth* small and finely formed, and his *teeth* white ; his *forehead* lofty and serene, with flowing *hair* of a bright chestnut. His *manners* were courteous, and his *countenance* seldom clouded by anything like spleen or melancholy. He was grave in *speech* and *action*, and had a marvellous *dignity* of presence. His *whole demeanour*, in fine, was truly that of a great king."

Here, the writer does little more than enumerate the several particulars of Ferdinand's appearance, viz., his height, complexion, features, hair, speech, action, and manner, and lastly, sums up with his whole demeanour. Though nothing is said of the king's morals or intellect, the passage fulfils its probable intention, which was to give a lively picture of his personal appearance.

III.

Our next example is the description of a prospect ; and is characterised by that vigour of delineation, and exquisite delicacy, and accuracy in choice of terms, for which its author is so justly celebrated :—

"If I were to choose a spot from which the rising or setting sun could be seen to the greatest possible advantage, it would be that wild *path* winding round the foot of the high belt of semicircular rocks, called

Salisbury crags, and marking the *verge* of the steep *descent* which slopes down into the *glen* on the south-eastern side of the city of *Edinburgh*. The prospect, in its general outline, commands a close-built, high-piled *city*, stretching itself out beneath in a form which, to a romantic imagination, may be supposed to represent that of a *dragon*;—now a noble arm of the *sea*, with its *rocks*, *isles*, distant *shores*, and boundary of *mountains*; and now a fair and fertile champaign *country*, varied with *hill*, *dale*, and *rock*, and skirted by the picturesque *ridge* of the Pentland Mountains. But as the path gently circles around the base of the cliffs, the prospect, composed as it is of these enchanting and sublime objects, changes at every step, and presents them blended with, or divided from, each other in every possible *variety* which can gratify the eye and the imagination. When a piece of scenery so beautiful, yet so varied,—so exciting by its intricacy, and yet so sublime,—is lighted up by the *tints* of morning or of evening, and displays all that variety of *shadowy depth* exchanged with *partial brilliancy*, which gives character even to the tamest of landscapes, the effect approaches near to *Enchantment*."—*Sir W. Scott*.

IV.

The following is the description of the moral character of Oliver Cromwell, by Smollett:—

"His character was formed of an amazing conjunction of *enthusiasm*, *hypocrisy*, and *ambition*. He was possessed of *courage* and *resolution* that overlooked all dangers, and saw no difficulties. He dived into the

characters of mankind with wonderful *sagacity*, whilst he concealed his own purposes under the impenetrable shield of *dissimulation*. He reconciled the most *atrocious crimes* to the most rigid notions of *religious obligations*. From the severest exercises of *devotion* he relaxed into the most ludicrous and idle *buffoonery*. He preserved the *dignity* and distance of his character in the midst of the coarsest *familiarity*. He was *cruel* and *tyrannical* from policy, *just* and *temperate* from inclination; *perplexed* and *despicable* in his discourse, *clear* and *consummate* in his designs; *ridiculous* in his reveries, *respectable* in his conduct: in a word, the strongest compound of villany and virtue, baseness and magnanimity, absurdity and good sense, that we find upon record in the annals of mankind."

Here, again, the words in italics show the main features of the character. It is to be observed, that the historian first notes the general disposition, and then proceeds to support his opinion by enumerating particulars. The first-mentioned qualities seem to form the basis of the character, and the latter part of the passage shows the result of those qualities, the whole concluding with a general view of the subject.

V.

The following description of a town in France is extracted from Mr. M'Culloch's "Geographical Dictionary." It consists merely of an enumeration of particulars.

"Château Thierry is a *town* in France, in the *department* of Aisne, situated on the *Marne*, twenty-five miles south of Soissons, and having a *population*

of 4761. It is built on the *declivity of a hill*, the summit of which is surmounted by its ancient *castle*, a vast mass of thick walls, towers, and turrets. It has a considerable *suburb* on the left bank of the Marne, the communication between them being kept up by a handsome *stone bridge* of three arches. It has a *court* of primary jurisdiction, a communal *college*, an *establishment* for the spinning of *cotton*, and *tanneries*. The famous poet, *La Fontaine*, not less original by his character and conduct than by his talent and genius, was born here on the 8th July, 1661. The *house* which he inhabited is still preserved; and a marble *statue* was erected to his memory on the end of the bridge in 1824. Château Thierry suffered considerably during the campaign of 1814."

VI.

The last example is the description of a piece of mechanism, which is given on the same principle as above, viz., enumeration; the parts, actions, &c., of the subject, being stated in their proper order.

"The *automaton coach and horses* constructed for Louis XIV., when a child, and described by M. Camus, is exceedingly curious. This consisted of a small *coach*, drawn by two *horses*, in which was the figure of a *lady* with a *footman* and *page* behind. On being placed at the extremity of a *table* of determinate size, the *coachman* smacked his *whip*, and the horses immediately set out, moving their legs in a very natural manner. When the carriage reached the edge of the table, it turned at a right angle, and proceeded along that edge. When it arrived opposite to the place

where the king was seated, it stopped, and the page getting down, opened a door, upon which the lady alighted, having in her hand a petition, which she presented with a curtsy. After waiting some time, she again curtsied, and re-entered the carriage; the page then resumed his place, the coachman whipped his horses, which began to move; the footman running after, jumped up behind, and the carriage drove on."

The following subjects are intended as exercises in descriptive writing :—

I.

Subject *An evening party.*

Materials :—1. The society. 2. Topics of conversation; scientific, literary, &c. 3. Discussion of the passing news. 4. Music; singing, playing. 5. Hour of departure, weather on the return home, &c.

II.

Subject *A bathing-place.*

Materials :—1. The situation. 2. Distance from the capital. 3. The size. 4. The population and their pursuits. 5. The visitors, where from, and their numbers. 6. The general amusements. 7. The walks in the vicinity. 8. The public buildings, churches, institutions. 9. The season when most frequented, &c.

III.

Subject *A newspaper.*

Materials :—1. The name and reputation. 2. Its circulation. 3. Advertisements. 4. General ar-

rangement. 5. Politics; talent displayed in its leading articles. 6. Foreign news, correspondents. 7. Literary criticism. 8. Parliamentary reports. 9. Legal intelligence. 10. Its general influence, &c.

IV.

Subject *A ship.*

Materials:—1. The name. 2. The dimensions. 3. The tonnage. 4. For what service. 5. Power of sailing. 6. Propelled by sails or steam. 7. Constructed of what material, number of masts, &c. 8. Accommodation for passengers. 9. Character of the captain. 10. The crew, their disposition and efficiency, &c.

V.

Subject *A journey.*

Materials:—1. In England, or on the Continent. 2. Railway, steamboat, carriage, &c. 3. The towns. 4. Characteristics of the people. 5. The language or dialect. 6. The scenery or general appearance of the country. 7. The incidents of the journey. 8. The number of the party travelling together. 9. The hotel accommodation. 10. The object of the journey. 11. The time it occupied. 12. The return home, &c.

VI.

Subject *A country walk.*

Materials:—1. The weather and time of the year. 2. Number of companions. 3. Meadows, green lanes,

high roads, &c. 4. Prospects. 5. Gentlemen's seats, farm-houses, woods, rivers, &c. 6. Incidents: storm, rain, people met, &c.

The following are proposed as useful subjects for description :—

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. A sea-port town. | 21. A costume. |
| 2. A telescope. | 22. A conflagration. |
| 3. A piano-forte. | 23. The Royal Exchange. |
| 4. A school-room. | 24. A tempest. |
| 5. A writing-desk. | 25. A lighthouse. |
| 6. The Crimea. | 26. A carriage. |
| 7. A river. | 27. A language. |
| 8. A cathedral. | 28. A calendar. |
| 9. A manufactory. | 29. London. |
| 10. A bridge. | 30. A university. |
| 11. A palace. | 31. A railway. |
| 12. The Exhibition (of 1851). | 32. A custom-house. |
| 13. A mine. | 33. The Thames Tunnel. |
| 14. A mountain. | 34. A cemetery. |
| 15. A man-of-war. | 35. A library. |
| 16. A monastery. | 36. Money. |
| 17. A prison. | 37. An army. |
| 18. A fortress. | 38. A pestilence. |
| 19. An hospital. | 39. An estate. |
| 20. A fleet. | 40. A tournament, &c. |

NARRATIVE.

A narrative is a species of description. Here the composition consists of the relation of events and circumstances, with an account of the characters engaged in them. In this form of writing, particular care should be taken of the arrangement. Facts should be related in the order of time in which they occurred, and should not be mixed up with each other. A narrative should be a plain and simple statement; such words should be chosen as will

best suit the case, and no attempt should be made at introducing far-fetched terms or high-flown language. Reflections suggested by the incidents may be occasionally interspersed with them; but it is recommended that, at first, the student confine himself to the mere relation of facts. At a later period, when he will have acquired some facility of expression in relation, remarks or reflections may be added. These, however, should never be too long, or too frequent, as they will then divert the reader's attention from the facts stated, and interfere with the interest awakened by the story. A shipwreck, a battle, the events of a reign, a conspiracy, &c., are proper subjects for a narrative.

EXAMPLES OF NARRATIVE.

I.

The following narrative of the Conquest of Rhodes by Solyman, the Turkish Sultan, extracted from Robertson's "History of Charles V.," is an example of this form of composition:—

"While the Christian princes were thus wasting each other's strength, Solyman the Magnificent entered Hungary with a numerous army, and investing Belgrade, which was deemed the chief barrier of that kingdom against the Turkish arms, soon forced it to surrender. Encouraged by this success, he turned his victorious arms against the island of Rhodes, the seat, at that time, of the knights of St. John of Jerusalem. This small state he attacked with such a numerous army as the lords of Asia have

been accustomed, in every age, to bring into the field. Two hundred thousand men, and a fleet of 400 sail, appeared against a town defended by a garrison consisting of 5000 soldiers, and 600 knights, under the command of Villiers de L'Isle Adam, the grand-master, whose wisdom and valour rendered him worthy of that station at such a dangerous juncture. No sooner did he begin to suspect the destination of Solyman's vast armaments, than he despatched messengers to all the Christian courts, imploring their aid against the common enemy. But though every prince in that age acknowledged Rhodes to be the great bulwark of Christendom in the East, and trusted to the gallantry of its knights as the best security against the progress of the Ottoman arms ; though Adrian, with a zeal which became the head and father of the church, exhorted the contending powers to forget their private quarrels, and, by uniting their arms, to prevent the infidels from destroying a society which did honour to the Christian name ; yet so violent and implacable was the animosity of both parties, that, regardless of the danger to which they exposed all Europe, and unmoved by the entreaties of the grand-master, they suffered Solyman to carry on his operations against Rhodes, without disturbance. The grand-master, after incredible efforts of courage, of patience, and of military conduct, during a siege of six months ; after sustaining many assaults, and disputing every post with amazing obstinacy, was obliged at last to yield to numbers, and, having obtained an honourable capitulation from the sultan, who admired and respected his virtue, he surrendered the town, which

was reduced to a heap of rubbish, and destitute of every resource. Charles and Francis, ashamed of having occasioned such a loss to Christendom by their ambitious contests, endeavoured to throw the blame of it on each other ; while all Europe, with greater justice, imputed it equally to both. The emperor, by way of reparation, granted the knights of St. John the small island of Malta, in which they fixed their residence, retaining, though with less power and splendour, their ancient spirit and implacable enmity to the infidels."

In the above passage, the order of time is strictly maintained. Solyman's success against Belgrade is mentioned as the immediate cause of the attack on Rhodes. We are then informed who were the defenders of this island, and of the respective numbers of the contending forces. The character of the grand-master is merely hinted at in general terms, and his efforts to gain assistance are described. Then come the part taken by the pope Adrian in the matter, and the cause of the neglect of the Christian princes to assist the knights. The circumstances of the siege are then stated, and the issue of the event ; the whole passage concluding with some remarks on the consequences of this event.

II.

The second example of this form is taken from Alison's "History of Europe," and gives an account of the circumstances attending the assassination of the Emperor Paul I. of Russia :—

"On the evening before his death, Paul received a

note, when at supper, warning him of the danger with which he was threatened. He put it in his pocket, saying he would read it on the morrow. He retired to bed at twelve. At two in the morning, Prince Suboff, whose situation and credit in the palace gave him access at all times to the imperial chambers, presented himself with the other conspirators at the door. A hussar, who refused admission, was cut down on the spot, and the whole party entered, and found the royal apartments empty. Paul, hearing the noise, had got up, and hid himself in a closet. 'He has escaped!' said some of the conspirators. 'That he has not,' returned Benning-sen. 'No weakness, or I will put you all to death.' At the same time, Pahlen, who never lost his presence of mind, put his hand on the bed-clothes, and feeling them warm, observed that the emperor could not be far off, and he was soon discovered and dragged from his retreat. They presented to the emperor his abdication to sign. Paul refused. A contest arose, and in the struggle, an officer's sash was passed round the neck of the unhappy monarch, and he was strangled, after a desperate resistance. The two grand-dukes were in the room below. Alexander eagerly inquired, the moment it was over, whether they had saved his father's life. Pahlen's silence told too plainly the melancholy tale, and the young prince tore his hair in an agony of grief, and broke out into sincere and passionate exclamations of sorrow at the catastrophe which had prepared the way for his ascent to the throne. The despair of the empress and the grand-duke Constantine was equally vehement; but Pahlen, calm and collected, represented

that the empire indispensably required a change of policy, and that nothing now remained but for Alexander to assume the reins of government."

The same principle is adopted in the above extract as in the one before it. The facts are related in the order in which they happened, without any observations or reflections. The emperor's neglect of the warning note—his retiring to bed—the appearance of the conspirators—the assassination of the sentinel—and the other circumstances which led to the catastrophe, are vividly and graphically told; what immediately followed the death of the emperor, being naturally reserved for the close of the description.

The following subjects are proposed as exercises in narrative :—

I.

Subject *A voyage.*

Materials :—The date of sailing — name of the ship — port from which she sailed — place of destination — passengers how many — describe incidents of the voyage — way of passing the day — the weather — the cargo — date of arrival, &c.

II.

Subject *A trial.*

Materials :—The court — judges — counsel — appearance of the prisoner — charge brought against him — evidence given by witnesses — positive or circumstantial — cross-examination — the defence —

the summing up and charge to the jury — time of the jury's deliberation — their verdict, &c.

III.

Subject *The reign of Richard I.*

Materials :— Date of his accession—whose son — his general character — persecution of the Jews — crusade — quarrel with Philip II. at Messina — his marriage at Cyprus — exploits in Palestine — his haughty temper — Philip's return — Richard quits the Holy Land — his shipwreck and imprisonment — ransom — return to England — war against Philip — circumstances and date of his death.

IV.

Subject. . . . *A battle.*

Materials :— Number of forces engaged — infantry — cavalry — guns — the description of the battle-field — disposition of the forces — position of the generals — the first attack — how sustained — vicissitudes of fortune — the reserve — last grand charge — victory and its consequences.

V.

Subject *A conspiracy.*

Materials :— The object — names of the leaders — their secret meetings — watchword — oath of secrecy — the plan of execution — betrayal by a conspirator — his motives — bribe? — conscientious? — consequent discovery of the plot — arrest of the leading conspirators — their trial and execution.

VI.

Subject *A rebellion.*

Materials : — Causes of discontent — grievances of the people — measures taken by the government — inflammatory harangues of orators — excitement of the populace — excesses — defiance of authority — depredations, fires, &c. — measures taken to restore order — special constables — the military — collision — the insurgents defeated — order restored — grievances redressed, &c.

VII.

Subject *A fire.*

Materials : — Midnight — silent — sudden outburst of fire — waking of the inmates — the increase of the flames — smoke — suffocation — rescue of the sufferers — injuries received — loss of property — consequent distress — destruction of valuable papers — insurance, &c.

Subjects for Narrative.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. A coronation. | 17. A retreat (from Moscow?). |
| 2. The plague of London. | 18. An invasion. |
| 3. An accident. | 19. A rebellion. |
| 4. The Norman Conquest. | 20. A storm at sea. |
| 5. A marriage ceremony. | 21. A visit to a library. |
| 6. A siege. | 22. A concert. |
| 7. A death-bed. | 23. A sea-fight. |
| 8. A tiger-hunt. | 24. A campaign. |
| 9. A shipwreck. | 25. A visit to some friends. |
| 10. A regatta. | 26. The voyage of a whaler. |
| 11. A continental journey. | 27. A visit to a salt-mine. |
| 12. A trip to the lakes. | 28. The execution of Mary
Queen of Scots. |
| 13. The ascent of Mont Blanc. | 29. Imprisonment in an ene-
my's country. |
| 14. A boat-race. | 30. A conflagration. |
| 15. An inundation. | |
| 16. A visit in the country. | |

LETTER-WRITING.

Of all the forms of composition, letter-writing, with which everybody is expected to be practically acquainted, is the one most frequently required. It is scarcely possible to lay down any positive rules on the subject of epistolary composition ; since, as letters embrace a very great variety of matter, the style will naturally vary with the subject, feelings of the writer, &c.

The form of a letter has been frequently adopted by writers wishing to convey their thoughts to the public on history, philosophy, &c. But these works are not to be classed as letters. Epistolary writing is recognised as a distinct form of composition, only when it is an easy and familiar conversation carried on between two friends by means of a letter.

The letters of illustrious persons have always been interesting ; sometimes from the importance of the subject ; but more frequently, because, being easy and friendly communications, they are generally a good criterion of the writer's character. For here, if anywhere, we naturally expect to find the man—his whole disposition and turn of mind.

In every case, therefore, of letter-writing, the main point, and one to be constantly held in view, is a simple and natural mode of expression. In a letter, everything should be easy and flowing ; the communication should be made in a clear, straightforward way, with no straining after effect, and no adoption of out-of-the-way terms or far-fetched expressions. With regard to the arrangement of the matter, it may be proper to say that whatever the writer wishes to

communicate about one subject, should be exhausted before he proceeds to another, so that he may not recur to it in the course of the letter.

By this means, all the materials of the letter will be arranged in proper order, and any misapprehension of the contents in the mind of the correspondent will be prevented.

A letter should be begun about one-third from the top of the page; and it may be needless to mention that the handwriting should be perfectly clear and legible, and that the most scrupulous attention be paid to the orthography and punctuation. Capital initials should never be used with nouns, unless when they are proper names, or happen to begin a sentence.*

With respect to the division of syllables, it should be remembered: Never to divide monosyllables, or words pronounced as monosyllables; such as "robbed," "sinned," &c. The syllables of a proper noun should never be divided; for example, it would be wrong to write Lon-don (the first syllable in one line and the second in the next) or Canter-bury, or Mr. John-son, &c.

It may be here useful to caution the learner against committing another very common fault in letter-writing; viz. writing the word "yours" with an apostrophe before the final s (your's). This should never be done. The apostrophe is properly used only in nouns, to distinguish the possessive singular from the plural, and is never correctly applied to pronouns of any class.

Another point for consideration is the length of a

* This rule should be carefully observed, as there seems just now a tendency in some to revive the obsolete practice of writing every noun with a capital initial.

letter. If we write with some special purpose, the letter should contain nothing but the one subject ; but if, as is often the case, we write to friends at a distance, a longer letter will be naturally expected. It would be strange, indeed, to write a very short note from Calcutta to London.

The practice of "holiday letter" writing is not to be recommended. There is nothing spontaneous or natural in holiday letters. They are, in general, stiff, formal compositions, always inspected by the teacher before they are despatched, and are, therefore, no criterion of a pupil's progress either in sense or style.

Many of our great writers are distinguished for the natural grace and ease of their epistolary style. The letters of Cowper, Gray, Lady Wortley Montagu, Pope, and others, specimens of which are here subjoined, are among the most celebrated.

SPECIMENS OF LETTERS.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

June 25th, 1785.

My dear friend,

I write in a nook that I call my *boudoir*. It is a summer-house not much bigger than a sedan chair, the door of which opens into the garden, that is now crowded with pinks, roses, and honeysuckles, and the window into my neighbour's orchard. It formerly served an apothecary, now dead, as a smoking room ; and under my feet is a trap-door, which once covered a hole in the ground, where he kept his bottles.

At present, however, it is dedicated to sublime uses. Having lined it with garden mats, and furnished it with a table and two chairs, here I write all that I write in summer time, whether to my friends or to the public. It is secure from all noise, and a refuge from all intrusion; for intruders sometimes trouble me in the winter evenings at Olney. But, thanks to my *boudoir*, I can now hide myself from them. A poet's retreat is sacred: they acknowledge the truth of that proposition, and never presume to violate it.

The last sentence puts me in mind to tell you that I have ordered my volume to your door. My bookseller is the most dilatory of all his fraternity; it is more than a month since I returned him the last proof, and consequently, since the printing was finished. I sent him the manuscript at the beginning of last November, that he might publish it when the town was full, and he will hit the exact moment when it is entirely empty. Patience, you will perceive, is in no situation exempt from the severest trials,—a remark that may serve to comfort you under the numberless trials of your own.

Yours, &c.,

WILLIAM COWPER.

To the Countess of Bute.

Louvère, July 20th, N.S., 1755.

My dear Child,

I have now read over the books you were so good to send, and intend to say something of them all, though some are not worth speaking of. I shall begin, in respect to his dignity, with Lord

Bolingbroke, who is a glaring proof how far vanity can blind a man, and how easy it is to varnish over, to one's self, the most criminal conduct. He declares he always loved his country, though he confesses he endeavoured to betray her to popery and slavery; and loved his friends, though he abandoned them to distress, with all the blackest circumstances of treachery. His account of the Peace of Utrecht is almost equally unfair or partial. I shall allow that, perhaps, the views of the Whigs, at that time, were too vast, and the nation, dazzled by military glory, had hopes too sanguine; but surely the same terms that the French consented to at the Treaty of Gertrudenberg, might have been obtained; or, if the displacing of the Duke of Marlborough raised the spirits of our enemies to a degree of refusing what they had before offered, how can he excuse the guilt of removing him from the head of a victorious army, and exposing us to submit to any articles of peace, being unable to continue the war? I agree with him, that the idea of conquering France is a wild, extravagant notion, and would, if possible, be impolitic; but she might have been reduced to such a state as would have rendered her incapable of being terrible to her neighbours for some ages: nor should we have been obliged, as we have done almost ever since, to bribe the French ministers to let us live in quiet. So much for his political reasonings, which, I confess, are delivered in a florid easy style; but I cannot be of Lord Orrery's opinion that he is one of the best English writers. Well turned periods, or smooth lines, are not the perfection either of prose or verse; they may serve to adorn, but can never stand in the

place of good sense. Copiousness of words, however ranged, is always false eloquence, though it will ever impose on some sort of understandings. How many readers and admirers has Madame de Sévigné, who only gives us, in a lively manner and fashionable phrases, mean sentiments, vulgar prejudices, and endless repetitions? Sometimes the tittle-tattle of a fine lady, sometimes that of an old nurse, always tittle-tattle; yet so well gilt over by airy expressions and a flowing style, she will always please the same people to whom Lord Bolingbroke will shine as a first-rate author. She is so far to be excused, that her letters were not intended for the press; while he labours to display to posterity all the wit and learning he is master of, and sometimes spoils a good argument by a profusion of words, running out into several pages a thought that might have been more clearly expressed in a few lines, and, what is worse, often falls into contradiction and repetitions, which are almost unavoidable to all voluminous writers, and can only be forgiven to those retailers whose necessity compels them to diurnal scribbling, who load their meaning with epithets, and run into digressions, because (in the jockey phrase), it rids ground, that is, it covers a certain quantity of paper, to answer the demand of the day. A great part of Lord Bolingbroke's letters are designed to show his reading, which, indeed, appears to have been very extensive; but I cannot perceive that such a minute account of it can be of any use to the pupil he intends to instruct; nor can I help thinking he is far below either Tillotson or Addison in style, though the latter was sometimes more diffuse than his judgment approved,

to furnish out the length of a daily "Spectator." I own I have small regard for Lord Bolingbroke as an author, and the highest contempt for him as a man. He came into the world greatly favoured both by nature and fortune, blest with a noble birth, heir to a large estate, endowed with a strong constitution, and, as I have heard, a beautiful figure, high spirits, a good memory, and a lively apprehension, which was cultivated by a learned education: all these glorious advantages being left to the direction of a judgment stifled by unbounded vanity, he dishonoured his birth, lost his estate, ruined his reputation, and destroyed his health, by a wild pursuit of eminence even in vice and trifles.

I am far from making misfortune a matter of reproach. I know there are accidental occurrences not to be foreseen or avoided by human prudence, by which a character may be injured, wealth dissipated, or a constitution impaired: but I think I may reasonably despise the understanding of one who conducts himself in such a manner as naturally produces such lamentable consequences, and continues in the same destructive paths to the end of a long life, ostentatiously boasting of morals and philosophy in print, and with equal ostentation bragging of the scenes of low debauchery in public conversation, though deplorably weak both in mind and body, and his virtue and his vigour in a state of non-existence. His confederacy with Swift and Pope puts me in mind of that of Bessus and his sword-men, in the "King and no King," who endeavour to support themselves by giving certificates of each other's merit. Pope has triumphantly declared that they may do and

say whatever silly things they please, they will still be the greatest geniuses ever exhibited. I am delighted with the comparison given of their benevolence, which is, indeed, most aptly figured by a circle in the water, which widens till it comes to nothing at all; but I am provoked at Lord Bolingbroke's misrepresentation of my favourite Atticus, who seems to have been the only Roman that, from good sense, had a true notion of the times in which he lived, in which the Republic was inevitably perishing; and the two factions, who pretended to support it, equally endeavouring to gratify their ambition in its ruin. A wise man, in that case, would certainly declare for neither, and try to save himself and family from the general wreck; which could not be done but by a superiority of understanding acknowledged on both sides. I see no glory in losing life or fortune by being the dupe of either, and very much applaud that conduct which could preserve an universal esteem amidst the fury of opposite parties. We are obliged to act vigorously where action can do any good; but in a storm, when it is impossible to work with success, the best hands and ablest pilots may laudably gain the shore if they can. Atticus could be a friend to men without awakening their resentment, and be satisfied with his own virtue without seeking popular fame; he had the reward of his wisdom in his tranquillity, and will ever stand among the few examples of true philosophy, either ancient or modern.

You must forgive this tedious dissertation. I hope you read in the same spirit I write, and take as proofs of affection whatever is sent you by your truly affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

To Mr. Digby.

August 12th, 1724.

My dear friend,

I have been above a month strolling about in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, from garden to garden, but still returning to Lord Cobham's with fresh satisfaction. I should be sorry to see my Lady Scudamore's till it has had the full advantage of Lord B——'s improvements; and then I will expect something like the waters of Riskins and the woods of Oakley together, which (without flattery) would be at least as good as anything in our world; for as to the hanging gardens of Babylon, the paradise of Cyrus, and the Sharawaggis of China, I have little or no ideas of them; but I dare say Lord B—— has, because they were certainly both very great and very wild. I hope Mrs. Mary Digby is quite tired of his lordship's *extravagante bergerie*; and that she is just now sitting, or rather reclining, on a bank, fatigued with over much dancing and singing at his unwearied request and instigation. I know your love of ease so well, that you might be in danger of being too quiet to enjoy quiet, and too philosophical to be a philosopher, were it not for the ferment Lord B—— will put you into. One of his lordship's maxims is, that a total abstinence from intemperance or business is no more philosophy than a total consopiation of the senses is repose; one must feel enough of its contrary to have a relish of either. But after all, let your temper work, and be as sedate and contemplative as you will, I will engage you shall be fit for any of us when you come to town in the winter. Folly will

laugh you into all the customs of the company here ; nothing will be able to prevent your conversion to her but indisposition, which, I hope, will be far from you. I am telling the worst that can come of you ; for as to vice, you are safe ; but folly is many an honest man's, nay, every good-humoured man's, lot ; nay, it is the seasoning of life ; and fools (in one sense) are the salt of the earth ; a little is excellent, though indeed a whole mouthful is justly called the devil.

So much for your diversions next winter, and for mine. I envy you much more at present than I shall then ; for if there be on earth an image of Paradise, it is in such perfect union and society as you all possess. I would have my innocent envies and wishes of your state known to you all ; which is far better than making you compliments, for it is inward approbation and esteem. My Lord Digby has in me a sincere servant, or would have, were there any occasion for me to manifest it.

Yours, &c.,
A. POPE.

To his Mother.

Cambridge, Nov. 7th, 1749.

My dear Mother,

The unhappy news I have just received from you equally surprises and afflicts me.* I have lost a person I loved very much, and have been much used to from my infancy ; but am much more concerned for your loss, the circumstances of which I

* The death of his aunt, Mrs. Mary Antrobus.

forbear to dwell upon, as you must be too sensible of them yourself; and will, I fear, more and more need a consolation that no one can give, except He who has preserved her to you so many years, and at last, when it was His pleasure, has taken her from us to Himself: and perhaps, if we reflect upon what she felt in this life, we may look upon this as an instance of His goodness both to her and to those that loved her. She might have languished many years before our eyes in a continual increase of pain, and totally helpless; she might have long wished to end her misery without being able to attain it; or perhaps even lost all sense, and yet continued to breathe; a sad spectacle to such as must have felt more for her than she could have done for herself. However you may deplore your own loss, yet think that she is at last easy and happy; and has now more occasion to pity us than we her. I hope and beg you will support yourself with that resignation we owe to Him who gave us our being for our good, and who deprives us of it for the same reason. I would have come to you directly, but you do not say whether you desire I should or not: if you do, I beg I may know it, for there is nothing to hinder me, and I am in very good health.

Yours, &c.,

THOMAS GRAY.

Subjects for Letters.

1. From a friend on his arrival in Canada.
2. From a brother to his sister (both at school).
3. From a sister at home to her brother at school.

4. From a daughter to her mother, describing a visit in the country.
5. From a son at school to his father, giving an account of his progress.
6. From a student at college to a friend, giving an account of his studies.
7. From a school-boy to his school-fellow, describing how he passed the holidays.
8. From the head of a mercantile house in London to his correspondent at Hong-Kong ; on business.
9. From a tourist on the Continent to a friend in London.
10. From a father to his son in Australia.
11. From an English merchant at the Havannah to his London correspondent ; on business.
12. From a guardian to his ward, travelling on the Continent with a tutor.
13. From a friend in the country to one in London ; an invitation.
14. From a daughter at school to her mother.
15. From a resident in India to a friend in England ; describing his mode of life.
16. From a military officer in India to his family in England.
17. From a correspondent in Paris to the editor of a London newspaper (*news*).
18. From a resident in Paris to his friend in London.
19. From a tourist in N. Wales to his friend.
20. A letter of congratulation to a young friend on his coming of age.

ON DESPATCHES AND REPORTS.

There are certain forms of writing which, though useful to all, should be the especial study of those who will have to fulfil secretarial duties, or who may be connected in any way with diplomatic affairs; viz. Despatches and Reports.

The chief difference between a despatch and a report is that the former gives an account of actions, or events, of recent occurrence; while the latter simply states the condition of things. A despatch describes the circumstances of a battle, the debates of a conference, the progress of a treaty; sometimes it gives an account of the particulars of a quarrel or misunderstanding with a foreign court; the result of an interview, the general tenor of a conversation, &c. A report may contain an account of the state of a colony, or of an army as to food, clothes, health, effective force, or numbers, &c.; in fine, a collection of all the statistics applicable in such cases. It might enter into particulars as to the intellectual or moral advancement of a certain population, the per centage of births and deaths, the prevalent forms of disease, &c.

The general qualities of style required in other cases are applicable to the preparation of a report or a despatch; though it should be remembered that here all attempts at fine writing are wholly out of place. A "plain, unvarnished tale," a clear and lucid statement, is all that is required, and, indeed, all that can be reasonably expected, when it is remembered that these writings are generally composed

rapidly, and on the spur of the moment, when there is no time, even if there were inclination, to be over-fastidious in expression.* Here, if anywhere, the "pen of a ready writer" is looked for; a power of clear description and methodical arrangement being the main essentials. The language should be correct and perspicuous; unstudied, natural, and flowing, with no unnecessary words, nor a single phrase savouring of affectation.

The despatches of the late Duke of Wellington are celebrated for their brevity and clearness of style, and may be regarded as models of this form of writing. Of these we subjoin the following specimens:—

(1.)

Deleytosa, Aug. 8th, 1809.

To Marquis Wellesley.

I am happy to find that the Junta have taken measures to supply the armies. Your Lordship will receive my sentiments upon the permanent arrangements to be adopted for this purpose, by the courier who will deliver this letter. In the mean time, I must inform your Excellency that if the Government have not already made great exertions to supply us, and if we do not experience the immediate effects of these exertions, by receiving a plentiful supply of provisions and forage, we must move away in as many detachments as there are roads from hence to the frontiers of

* It is said of Addison, that his fastidiousness in regard to expression would sometimes so embarrass him in the preparation of an urgent despatch, that he was obliged to resign the task to the clerks, in order that it might be expedited in time.

Portugal. I assure your Excellency that, since the 3rd, the army had had no bread till yesterday, when about 4000 lbs. of biscuit were divided among 30,000 mouths.

The army will be useless in Spain, and will be entirely lost, if this treatment is to continue; and I must say, that if any efficient measures for our relief had been adopted by the Government when they first received the accounts of our distresses from the want of provisions, we ought before now to have received the benefit of them. There is this day again no bread for the soldiers.

I must at the same time do the late British minister the justice to declare that I do not conceive that this deficiency of supplies for the army is at all to be attributed to any neglect or omission on his part. It is to be attributed to the poverty and exhausted state of the country; to the inactivity of the magistrates and people; to their disinclination to take any trouble, except that of packing up their property and running away when they hear of the approach of a French patrol; and to their habits of insubordination and disobedience of, and to the want of power in, the Government and their officers.

(2.)

Badajoz, Nov. 30th, 1809.

To the Earl of Liverpool.

The Spanish army in La Mancha, which I reported to your Lordship in my despatch of the 16th November were on the 10th instant at Los Barrios, not far from Ocaña, moved on that night to attack a French corps which was in Ocaña.

It appears that the Spanish Commander-in-chief was not aware that the French corps in Ocaña consisted of 5000 infantry as well as of 800 cavalry ; and he made his first attack with the Spanish cavalry only, supported by the infantry, which were repulsed with some loss of men, and, as I have understood, of two pieces of cannon. The French maintained their position in Ocaña till three in the morning, when they retired one league from the town towards Aranjuez ; and at daylight they retired to that town, and the Spanish army took up its quarters again at Los Barrios. They remained there till the 13th, when they moved to their right to Santa Cruz de la Zarza ; and on the 18th they returned to Los Barrios, with the intention of attacking a French corps of about 25,000 men, including 5000 cavalry, which was advanced from Aranjuez towards Ocaña.

General Areyzaga found, however, that it was most probable that the enemy would attack him before he should be prepared to make his movements, and he formed his army in the plain in the rear of Ocaña to receive their attack on the morning of the 19th instant. The enemy advanced in three columns, with one of which they took possession of Ocaña ; and, having overthrown the Spanish cavalry on the right of their position, they broke the Spanish infantry of the right wing, which was thrown into confusion ; and the left wing of the army, which was likewise threatened with an attack by the right column of the enemy, retired without firing a shot. The loss of the Spanish army upon this occasion has been considerable.

(3.) The Duke of Marlborough's despatch, announcing the victory of Blenheim : —

To Mr. Secretary Harley.

Camp at Hochstet, Aug. 14th, 1704.

Sir,

I gave you an account on Sunday afternoon of the situation we were then in, and that we expected to hear the enemy would pass the Danube at Lavingen, in order to attack Prince Eugène. At eleven that night, we had an express from him that the enemy were come over, and desiring he might be reinforced, whereupon, I ordered my brother Churchill to advance at one o'clock in the morning with his twenty battalions, and by three the whole army was in motion ; for the greater expedition, I ordered part of the troops to pass over the Danube, and follow the march of the twenty battalions ; and with most of the horse and the foot of the first line, I passed the Lech at Rain, and came over the Danube at Donauwert, so that we all joined the prince that night, intending to advance and take this camp of Hochstet, in order whereto we went out on Tuesday, early in the morning, with forty squadrons to view the ground ; but found the enemy had already possessed themselves of it, whereupon we resolved to attack them, and accordingly we marched between three and four, yesterday morning, from the camp at Münster, leaving all our tents standing. About six, we came in view of the enemy, who, we found, did not expect so early a visit. The cannon began to play at half an hour after eight. They formed themselves into two bodies ; the Elector, with M. Marsin and their troops, opposite our

right ; and M. de Tallard, with all his, opposed to our left, which last fell to my share. They had two little rivulets, besides a morass, before them, which we were obliged to pass in their view, and Prince Eugène was forced to take a great compass to come to the enemy, so that it was one o'clock before the battle began ; it lasted with great vigour till sunset, when the enemy were obliged to retire, and, by the blessing of God, we obtained a complete victory. We have cut off great numbers of them, as well in the action as in the retreat, besides upwards of thirty squadrons of the French, which we pushed into the Danube, where we saw the greatest part of them perish, M. de Tallard, with several of his general officers, being taken prisoners at the same time ; and in the village of Blenheim, which the enemy had entrenched and fortified, and where they made the greatest opposition, we obliged twenty-six battalions and twelve squadrons of dragoons to surrender themselves prisoners at discretion. We took likewise all their tents standing with their cannon and ammunition, as also a great number of standards, kettle-drums and colours in the action, so that I reckon the greatest part of M. Tallard's army is taken or destroyed. The bravery of all our troops on this occasion cannot be expressed ; the generals as well as the officers and soldiers behaving themselves with the greatest courage and resolution, the horse and dragoons having been obliged to charge four or five several times.

The Elector and M. Marsin were so advantageously posted, that Prince Eugène could make no impression upon them till the third attack, at or near seven at

night, when he made a great slaughter of them ; but, on being near a wood-side, a good body of Bavarians retired into it, and the rest of that army retreated towards Lavingen, it being too late, and the troops too much tired to pursue them far. I cannot say too much in praise of the prince's good conduct, and the bravery of his troops on this occasion.

You will please to lay this before her Majesty and his Royal Highness, to whom I send my Lord Tunbridge with the good news.

I pray you, likewise, inform yourself and let me know her Majesty's pleasure as well relating to M. de Tallard and the other general officers, as for the disposal of near 1200 other officers, and between 8000 and 9000 common soldiers, who, being all made prisoners by her Majesty's troops, are entirely at her disposal ; but as the charge of subsisting these officers and men must be very great, I presume her Majesty will be inclined that they be exchanged for any other prisoners that offer.

I should likewise be glad to receive her Majesty's directions for the disposal of the standards and colours, whereof I have not yet the number, but guess there cannot be less than a hundred, which is more than has been taken in any battles these many years.

You will easily believe that in so long and vigorous an action, the English, who had so great a share in it, must have suffered, as well in officers as men, but I have not yet the particulars.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

MARLBOROUGH.

(4.) Lord Nelson's celebrated despatch of the battle of the Nile : —

To Admiral the Earl St. Vincent, K.B., Commander-in-chief.

“Vanguard,” off the mouth of the Nile,
August 3rd, 1798.

My Lord,

Almighty God has blessed his Majesty's arms in the late battle by a great victory over the fleet of the enemy, who I attacked at sunset on the 1st of August, off the mouth of the Nile. The enemy were moored in a strong line of battle for defending the entrance of the bay (of shoals), flanked by numerous gun-boats, four frigates, and a battery of guns and mortars on an island in their van; but nothing could withstand the squadrons your Lordship did me the honour to place under my command. Their high state of discipline is well known to you, and with the judgment of the captains, together with their valour, and that of the officers and men of every description, it was absolutely irresistible. Could anything from my pen add to the character of the captains, I would write it with pleasure; but that is impossible.

I have to regret the loss of Captain Westcott, of the “Majestic,” who was killed early in the action; but the ship was continued to be so well fought by her first lieutenant, Mr. Cuthbert, that I have given him an order to command her till your Lordship's pleasure is known.

The ships of the enemy, all but their two rear ships, are nearly dismasted; and those two, with two frigates, I am sorry to say, made their escape;

nor was it, I assure you, in my power to prevent them. Captain Hood most handsomely endeavoured to do it; but I had no ship in a condition to support the "Zealous," and I was obliged to call her in.

The support and assistance I have received from Captain Berry cannot be sufficiently expressed. I was wounded in the head, and obliged to be carried off the deck; but the service suffered no loss by that event: Captain Berry was fully equal to the important service then going on, and to him I must beg leave to refer you for every information relative to this victory. He will present you with the flag of the second in command, that of the Commander-in-chief being burnt in "L'Orient."

Herewith I transmit you lists of the killed and wounded, and the lines of battle of ourselves and the French. I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

Subjects for Despatches.

1. The outbreak of a mutiny.
2. A march through an enemy's country.
3. A riot at an election.
4. The proceedings at a meeting.
5. A night attack on an outpost.
6. An accident on a railway.
7. Recent events in a British colony.
8. A cruise along an enemy's coast.
9. The bombardment of a sea-port.
10. The storming of a fortress.
11. The passage of an army through a defile.
12. An audience of a foreign prince.

REPORTS.

Parliamentary reports are generally very voluminous; they are the result of evidence given before committees appointed to inquire into some specific subject. Witnesses are summoned before the committee; their answers to questions put by the members (called minutes of evidence) are taken down; and the report embodies the opinions formed by the committee on the evidence adduced before them. On the occasion of the appointment of a select committee to *inquire into the Education of the lower Orders of the Metropolis*, which took place in 1816, as many as fifty-two witnesses were examined. The inquiry began on the 22nd of May, and ended on the 19th of June, 1816; and the following report on the subject was issued:—

“Your committee have examined a great body of evidence, which has been reported and ordered to be printed, respecting the state of education among the lower orders in the metropolis; and they have found reason to conclude, that a very large number of poor children are wholly without the means of instruction, although their parents appear to be generally very desirous of obtaining that advantage for them.

“Your committee have also observed, with much satisfaction, the highly beneficial effects produced upon all those parts of the population which, assisted in whole or in part by various charitable institutions, have enjoyed the benefits of education.

“Your committee have not had time this session

fully to report their opinion upon the different branches of their inquiry ; but they feel persuaded that the greatest advantages would result to this country from Parliament taking proper measures, in concurrence with the prevailing disposition in the community, for supplying the deficiency of the means of instruction which exists at present, and for extending this blessing to the poor of all descriptions.

“ Although your committee have not been instructed to examine the state of education beyond the metropolis, they have, in addition to what has appeared in evidence, received communications which show the necessity of Parliament as speedily as possible instituting an inquiry into the management of charitable donations and other funds for the instruction of the poor of this country, and into the state of their education generally. And your committee are of opinion that the most effectual, as well as least expensive mode of conducting such an inquiry would be by means of a parliamentary commission.

“ 20th June, 1816.”

The following list of subjects will furnish the student with exercises in this form of writing. It may perhaps be supposed that such exercises are far too difficult for a learner, and that they require much more extensive information than he can have possibly acquired. But it is not necessary that such writings be descriptive of actual facts ; the subjects are only intended as suggestive, and the reports themselves may be wholly fictitious. The object here is merely to give him practice in a form of composition which he may probably require in after life.

Subjects for Reports.

1. Report on the health of a regiment quartered in a certain locality.
2. Report on the amount—and species — of crime in a certain county.
3. On the condition of an agricultural district.
4. On the morals of a manufacturing town.
5. On the sanitary condition of a certain quarter of a city.
6. On the habits of the population of a sea-port.
7. On the buildings of the poor.
8. On the literature of the day.
9. On the commercial resources of an island.
10. On the produce of a mining district.
11. On the education of the poor in a certain town.
12. On the prevalent diseases in certain localities.
13. On juvenile delinquency.
14. On the condition of an hospital.
15. Report on a grammar school.
16. On the moral and religious condition of the English soldier.
17. On the condition and prospects of a society (or company).
18. On the increase (or decrease) of pauperism in a certain parish.
19. On the examination of a class of students in history.
20. On the condition of a prison.'



EXAMINATION QUESTIONS ON PART II.

1. What is a definition ?
2. Whence is the word " definition " derived ?
3. Of how many parts does a definition consist ?
4. Give the names of these parts, and explain their meaning.
5. What errors are we likely to fall into, in defining terms ?
6. How does a description differ from a definition ?
7. How should we proceed in describing ?
8. To what cases may description be applied ?
9. What is a narrative, and how does it differ from a description ?
10. To what cases may narrative be applicable ?
11. What general principles should be observed in narrative ?
12. What style should be adopted in writing a letter ?
13. What general rules apply to this form of writing ?
14. What general qualities of style are required in a despatch or report ?

PART III.

FORMS OF ARGUMENT.

ARGUMENTS.

COMPOSITION, properly so called, does not consist merely of a string of assertions or remarks. In every well-written piece, the propositions and general assertions must be explained, illustrated, or supported. It is necessary, in order to show that our opinions are correct, that they be proved by arguments. There are, indeed, some propositions so obviously true, that they require no proof,—they are admitted at once: and as every one allows them to be true, they cannot be made subjects of argument. For instance, no one would seriously think of employing his reasoning powers in proving the truth that “two and two make four,” or that “two straight lines cannot enclose a space,” &c. But there are many other conclusions of a different nature, and which, though true, may require explanation or illustration, and this explanation, in all forms of composition, is expected of the writer.

The means by which opinions are proved are called “arguments,” and these are derived from various sources; that is, we may prove the truth of an asser-

tion not by one, but by many forms of argument. The opinion is the conclusion at which we have arrived on any subject, and arguments show our reasons for arriving at that conclusion.

The following are some of the sources whence arguments may be derived :—

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Enumeration. | 8. Proverbs. |
| 2. Contrast. | 9. Sayings or quotations. |
| 3. Explanation. | 10. Analogy. |
| 4. Cause and effect. | 11. Fables. |
| 5. Experience. | 12. Example. |
| 6. History. | 13. Interrogation. |
| 7. General or universal consent. | |

I. ENUMERATION.

In the majority of cases, our ideas are not simple, but complex; that is, they are made up of all the qualities belonging to some one thing. Now, in arguing by enumeration, all we have to do is to state these particulars, so that our view of the whole subject may be clearly understood. The following model will explain this form of reasoning :—

MODEL.

Given proposition . . . “*It was a lovely night!*”

It was a lovely night! The sky was unclouded. The brilliant moon, riding aloft in the heavens, cast her silvery light o’er hill and valley, meadow and lake. Scarcely a breeze ruffled the surface of the water, and not a sound was heard save the distant plash of the boatman’s oar, or the occasional rustling of the leaves of a neighbouring grove. A balmy air wafted an exquisite fragrance through the atmosphere,

and all nature seemed to conspire to fill the soul with delight!

The above passage consists of a collection of those particulars or circumstances which combine in making up the idea of a "lovely night." Moon, hill, valley, meadow, lake, leaves, fragrant perfume, &c., are these particulars, and these, arranged in order, support the assertion.

The following propositions are intended as subjects for exercise in this form of argument. They are to be worked on the principle explained in the above model.

Propositions to be supported by Enumeration.

1. Spring is the most beautiful season of the year.
2. He was a very amusing companion.
3. My cousin is a learned man.
4. His sister was very accomplished.
5. Mr. B. is a great traveller.
6. England is the most commercial country in the world.
7. Italy has produced many great artists.
8. The Germans are a very musical people.
9. We spent a remarkably pleasant evening.
10. We passed a miserable night.
11. My friend has been seriously ill.
12. Julius Cæsar was a great commander.
13. It was a wretched day.
14. This king was of a weak character.
15. "Paradise Lost" is a sublime poem.
16. Louis XIV. was a despotic monarch.
17. She is of a kind disposition.

18. William the Conqueror oppressed the Saxons.
19. Alfred was the greatest of the Saxon kings.
20. The drawing-room was elegantly furnished.

II. CONTRAST.

The next form of argument is by contrast. Suppose our object be to show that some quality or line of conduct is commendable, we may contrast it with its opposite, in order that its excellence may be thus made more evident. Snow will appear more brilliantly white when contrasted with any object of a dark colour; and virtue will be more evidently desirable when opposed to vice. Thus, to prove the excellence of a good education, we may show the difference between the refined and well-informed gentleman, and the rude, illiterate boor, and this contrast will set the superiority of the one over the other in a stronger light. This form of reasoning is adopted in the following model:—

MODEL.

Given proposition . . . { *Society has numerous advantages.*

Society has numerous advantages. Here we learn to practise many virtues, such as kindness, forbearance, benevolence, &c. Here also we have many opportunities of improving our minds by acquiring knowledge on various subjects, and considering the differences of opinion on questions discussed, &c. But the hermit or recluse can never enjoy these privileges. How can he practise any of the social virtues who refuses to enter that circle where alone they can be exercised! or by what means can he improve his reasoning powers

who has no one to reason with but himself, and hears no opinions differing from his own !

The following propositions are to be used as subjects for exercise in arguing by contrast, as in the above model :—

Propositions to be proved by arguing on the principle of Contrast.

1. Some form of government is indispensable to a nation.
2. We must exercise both the body and the mind.
3. Affected people are always disagreeable.
4. We should be kind to one another.
5. Occasional recreation is necessary.
6. It is our duty to obey our superiors.
7. Knowledge ensures respect.
8. Indulgence in violent passions is degrading to the mind.
9. We should endeavour to acquire a habit of attention.
10. Nothing is more charming than simplicity.
11. A habit of observation is invaluable.
12. All our duties should be promptly performed.
13. Travelling assists in removing prejudices.
14. A taste for art should be cultivated.
15. No vice is more selfish than avarice.
16. A good temper is the main spring of happiness.
17. We should always speak the truth.
18. A government should be careful to reward merit.
19. Nothing is more odious than a proud spirit.
20. The amiable gain many friends.

III. EXPLANATION.

A general assertion may be frequently supported by an *explanation*. This is done when the statement made is partly equivocal, or open to several meanings, and the object is to place it in a clearer light, and show in what signification the writer intends it to be taken. Here we argue from the genus to the species, and the explanation shows in what particular cases the general proposition holds good.

The following model will illustrate this mode of argument:—

MODEL.

Given proposition . . . *Nature does nothing in vain.*

Nature does nothing in vain. It is true that we have not yet been able to discover the designs of Providence in all the works of Nature; but the researches and discoveries of philosophy justify us in concluding that the apparently most insignificant object has been created for some wise purpose. Thus, the very leaves that fall from the trees in autumn form a rich soil wherein to grow new plants; and it is well known that the gases given off by the most fragrant flowers furnish the atmosphere with one of its essential ingredients.

Let the learner write paragraphs on the following propositions, supporting them, as in the above model, by explanation.

Propositions to be supported by Explanation.

1. A new study presents many difficulties.
2. I was much puzzled at this question.

3. Music is a charming art.
4. Italian is the most harmonious of European languages.
5. English grammar is remarkable for its simplicity.
6. Ambition is a noble passion.
7. Christianity has greatly contributed to promote civilization.
8. He was a man of excellent principles.
9. A judge should be strictly impartial.
10. Shakspeare was the greatest of modern poets.
11. Adversity is not without its advantages.
12. Modesty differs from bashfulness.
13. Every language has its characteristics.
14. The Athenians were celebrated for their delicacy of taste.
15. This style is very faulty.
16. English is a copious and flexible language.
17. Paper is applied to many uses.
18. We derive much knowledge from books.
19. Attention is indispensable to improvement.
20. This is a most interesting work.

IV. CAUSE AND EFFECT. (1.)

This form of reasoning is of frequent occurrence, and may be applied in very numerous cases. It is assumed that there is a close connection between cause and effect ; and that if the cause be admitted as good, its effect must also be good. The converse of this proposition must hold equally true ; i. e. if the effect be pernicious it cannot be produced by a good cause. This principle is extensively used in arguing on questions connected with physical philosophy ; but

we shall here apply it chiefly to moral or practical subjects. For example, we may show that industry is desirable from the success by which it is generally followed, or that drunkenness is a fatal vice, because its effects are to deprive its victim of his reason, to squander his estate, and to bring disgrace and ruin on his family.

The following model is an example of this form of reasoning :—

MODEL.

Given proposition *Be not suspicious.*

Be not suspicious. A man of suspicious temper is a torment to himself and his companions. His mind is never at ease. He is perpetually imagining that others are plotting against his peace. He gives no one credit for good feeling, and he thus completely alienates the good-will of those who would otherwise be interested in his welfare. If suspicion generally prevailed, every man would stand in fear of his neighbour, and all the bonds of society would be burst asunder.

The opinions expressed in the following list of propositions are to be maintained by arguing on the principle of cause and effect.

Propositions to be proved by showing the Effect.

1. We should cultivate our tastes.
2. Indolence is a most pernicious condition of the mind.
3. Decision of character is especially necessary in a ruler.

4. Captivity has fearful effects on the human mind.
5. Excessive severity is to be deprecated.
6. Address is preferable to violence.
7. A national literature should be encouraged.
8. Philosophy, when studied in a right spirit, produces incalculable advantages.
9. "Train up a child in the way he should go."
10. A police force is necessary in every large city.
11. It is wrong to spare the guilty.
12. Slander must be carefully shunned.
13. Mode of occupation affects the character.
14. Candour is universally admired.
15. The natural affections should be cultivated.
16. Be kind to your companions.
17. "A little learning is a dangerous thing."
18. We should not contend about trifles.
19. Opportunities must not be neglected.
20. It is unwise to attempt to please everybody.

IV. CAUSE AND EFFECT. (2.)

In the last lesson, the truth of the statement was proved by the effect; here the effect will appear in the given proposition, and we shall endeavour to show the cause that produced this effect. For example, if we state that some one has an amiable disposition, or is well-informed, these effects may be accounted for by referring to the causes which led to them, such as care bestowed on his moral education, various circumstances of his early life, &c.

This form of argument may be illustrated by the following model:—

MODEL.

Given proposition . . . $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{The firm was in a flourishing} \\ \textit{condition.} \end{array} \right.$

The firm was in a flourishing condition. The experience the partners had gained in the earlier period of their career, had made them more cautious, and they avoided all dealings with those whose credit was not known to be firmly established. Their increased wealth had enabled them to extend their business so widely, that there was scarcely a place of any importance in the world with which they had not commercial transactions.

Let the learner explain the following propositions, which represent effects, by showing the causes which led to them.

Propositions (Effects) to be explained by stating their Causes.

1. The country was now in a state of profound tranquillity.
2. Your friend is very much improved.
3. His brother gained the prize.
4. All the family have been in great distress.
5. My uncle has quite regained his health.
6. They live very happily together.
7. Her aunt is a great invalid.
8. She was beloved by all who knew her.
9. Cardinal Wolsey fell into disgrace with the king.
10. The Roman Empire fell a prey to the barbarians.
11. He was very successful in business.
12. The house stopped payment.
13. The siege was raised in the beginning of the year.

14. His cousin was appointed to the office.
15. The gallant soldier was promoted on the spot.
16. The mob broke into and plundered several houses.
17. The condition of the poor is much improved.
18. My friend is now become a rich man.
19. He was in a state of great agitation.
20. The lecturer received a handsome present from his pupils.

IV. CAUSE AND EFFECT. (3.)

Another way of reasoning upon this principle is when a fact or an event is stated; and the writer mentions the causes which led to it, and the consequences or effects which it produced. The whole paragraph will here consist of three parts arranged in the following order:—1. Cause; 2. Fact; 3. Consequence:—

The following model is constructed of three parts, as above explained:—

MODEL.

Given proposition { *The French Revolution broke*
 (an event) . . . { *out in 1789.*

1. (*Cause.*) For many years there had been symptoms of wide-spread discontent throughout France. The people were grievously oppressed and unequally taxed; justice was partially administered; the nobles and higher clergy enjoyed excessive and undue privileges; and, worse than all, every grade of society was infected with infidelity and irreligion. It was no wonder that such a state of things should lead to a political revolution. 2. (*The event.*) This convulsion, which was to shake all Europe, and threaten the

dissolution of society itself, dates from May 5th, 1789, when the States-General met to construct a new constitution. 3. (*Consequence*). It caused the downfall of the French monarchy, the annihilation of the nobility, and the execution of the king and queen, and eventually plunged all Europe into a war, from the effects of which it can be scarcely said to have yet recovered.

The learner is to write paragraphs constructed as the above model, consisting of, 1. The Cause; 2. The Event or Fact (expressed in the propositions given); and 3. the Effects.

Propositions (Facts), the Causes and Effects to be added.

1. The poor man died last week.
2. The house became bankrupt.
3. The troops marched into the defile.
4. He acquired a perfect knowledge of the language.
5. The armies met at Waterloo.
6. Columbus discovered a new world.
7. He became heir to a large estate.
8. The king was extremely angry.
9. Our friends fell into misfortunes.
10. The civil war in England broke out in 1642.
11. Louis XIV. ravaged the Palatinate.
12. The law was passed early in the session.
13. The husband contracted habits of intemperance.
14. The vessel had not her complement of men.
15. The building was destroyed by fire.
16. The clerk was discharged from his office.
17. My uncle returned from India.

18. The Americans succeeded in establishing their independence.
19. Napoleon became Emperor of France in 1804.
20. He remonstrated seriously with his friends.

V. EXPERIENCE.

In many cases we form our conclusions from experience. Here we argue upon the natural principle of inferring that what has uniformly happened under certain circumstances, will, under similar circumstances, happen again. Thus, if we have occasion to observe that habits of extravagance and excessive expenditure are a frequent cause of ruin, we may fairly conclude that this line of conduct, in any particular case, will produce the same result. Experience may be gained from various sources, such as personal observation, reading, conversation, &c. As a general rule, experience can be gained only by age, and therefore the young can hardly expect to have the same advantages in this respect as the more advanced in life.

In the following model, this form of reasoning is adopted:—

MODEL.

Given proposition . . . { *Eloquence has a powerful influence.*

Eloquence has a powerful influence. This truth is attested by the history of all ages, both ancient and modern. It is well known that Philip of Macedon was more afraid of the thunder of Demosthenes' eloquence than of the whole collective power of the

Athenian people. And there are persons still living who remember and feel the wonderful sway that a Pitt or a Fox wielded over his audience. Who that has listened to the glowing words of an excited orator, and the insinuating tones of his voice, or seen his graceful and expressive gestures, and the earnestness of his convictions, has not felt the difficulty — not to say impossibility — of resisting such a fascinating influence!

The propositions in the following list are to be supported by arguments drawn from experience, as in the above model.

Propositions to be proved by Experience.

1. It is wrong to irritate an angry man.
2. There can be no success without application.
3. No one becomes suddenly wicked.
4. We should be prepared for the worst.
5. A wise man is never surprised.
6. The tongue kills more than the sword.
7. Recreation is necessary.
8. Excessive indulgence is pernicious.
9. Much knowledge is gained from books.
10. Music is a delightful art.
11. Ambition is a natural principle.
12. Rumour has a thousand tongues.
13. Industry is better than brilliant talents.
14. Curiosity is an inherent principle in human nature.
15. Kindness begets kindness.
16. Pride will have a fall.
17. Virtue is its own reward.

18. Experience is the best master.
19. Novelty produces great pleasure.
20. There is nothing dearer to us than our country.

VI. HISTORY.

History is an inexhaustible storehouse of example ; and cases drawn from this source are frequently quoted in proof of general propositions. There is scarcely a virtue or vice incidental to human nature of which history does not furnish us with many examples. Thus, in illustration of the nobleness of generosity, we might cite Alexander the Great's behaviour to the mother and wife of Darius, or King Richard's forgiveness of his brother John. Again, to show the fatal consequences of unrestrained passion, we might quote the case of Henry the Second's exclamation against Becket, or the circumstances of the death of Valentinian the First. Of course, the more extensive our historical reading, the greater the number of examples we shall have to refer to ; but a tolerable knowledge of English history alone will furnish cases applicable to a very great variety of subjects.

In the following model, the proofs are drawn from history : —

MODEL.

Given proposition . . . $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{A civil war generally leads} \\ \text{to despotism.} \end{array} \right.$

A civil war generally leads to despotism. This would seem to be a natural consequence of intestine division. One of the contending parties gains the upper hand, and establishes a despotic power over the

other. The quarrels of Athens and Sparta eventually led to the subjugation of Greece by the Romans; the civil wars of Rome were followed by the establishment of an empire; and in modern times, the horrors of the French Revolution ended in the absolute power of Napoleon the First.

This form of argument is to be applied to the following:—

Propositions to be illustrated or proved by historical Examples.

1. Be not daunted by difficulties.
2. Unity is strength.
3. Perseverance will at length succeed.
4. Take time by the forelock.
5. Bad examples are infectious.
6. Occupation keeps both body and mind healthy.
7. "What great events from trivial causes spring!"
8. Honesty is the best policy.
9. Trivial actions betray the real character.
10. None are completely happy.
11. Resist the first temptations to evil.
12. Necessity is the mother of invention.
13. "A soft answer turneth away wrath."
14. "Too much familiarity breeds contempt."
15. The fine arts assist civilisation.
16. Luxury is destructive of liberty.
17. Learning tends to virtue.
18. Climate affects national character.
19. "There's no art to know the mind's construction in the face."
20. Nothing is impossible to a strong will.

VII. GENERAL OR UNIVERSAL CONSENT.

What most people agree in believing, is likely to be true in the abstract ; but when we can show that a certain opinion is held universally, this is one of the strongest arguments that can be adduced in its support. We must not, however, carry this principle too far ; for large multitudes of men have frequently held, and acted on, opinions which proved to be erroneous. But, in general, the rule that " the consent of mankind is the voice of nature," is a sound principle, and one which may be made a solid foundation for many actions and opinions. Thus, one argument to prove the existence of God may be drawn from the universality of this belief ; as it is well known that by all men, and in all ages, a belief in a Supreme Being has existed.

The reasoning in the following model is founded upon this principle : —

MODEL.

Given proposition . . . { *No nation can exist without a government.*

The necessity for some form of government has been always so keenly felt, that no community was ever known to exist without it. Its form may, and does, vary in various countries ; but no human power has ever been strong enough to abolish it altogether. Even in cases of the wildest civil discord, the first thing done by successful revolutionists is to form a new, or at least a provisional, government ; for every one feels that without some rule, no man's life would be safe for a moment. It was said by an eminent

historian, that men may go without food for twenty-four hours, but that they cannot dispense with a government for that space of time.

The arguments on the propositions in the list below are to be drawn from the principle of general or universal consent.

Propositions proved by general or universal Consent.

1. Virtue is its own reward, and vice its own punishment.
2. We should avoid extremes.
3. Wealth has great influence.
4. Do to others as you would be done by.
5. It is never too late to mend.
6. "Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow."
7. A liar is never to be believed.
8. A marshy country produces fever.
9. Ignorance and crime go hand in hand.
10. "Evil communications corrupt good manners."
11. No man would deal with a known rogue.
12. A large body of men never agree on one subject.
13. Variety is charming.
14. Novelty is the chief pleasure in travelling.
15. Rational beings are responsible for their actions.
16. Trials are the lot of human nature.
17. Pride alienates friends.
18. The most commercial nations are the most wealthy.
19. Virtue alone produces happiness.
20. The young can never be experienced.

VIII. PROVERBS.

Proverbs are short and pithy sentences, containing some moral or practical precept ; it is not generally known who was the author of these sentences ; but they are supposed to have originated with the common people, and may be regarded as the result of the experience, and the exponents of the practical wisdom of a nation. Much knowledge of national characteristics may be drawn from the study of proverbs, and they are frequently quoted in order to strengthen a position, or illustrate an opinion in arguing. Thus the expediency of calm deliberation in action may be shown in the proverb, "Most haste, worst speed ;" and the necessity of perseverance is illustrated in the saying, "Slow and steady wins the race," &c.

In the following model the position is supported by a proverb : —

MODEL.

Given proposition *Appearances are deceiving.*

Most people have a very natural tendency to judge of things as they appear. There is little doubt that the first impression — whether favourable or otherwise — made by the sight of any object is likely to be deep and lasting. Nay, more ; this impression may interfere with our judgment of it, even when we are afterwards better acquainted with its nature. But though we may allow something to first impressions, it is most unwise to judge wholly by them, — and we should remember the truth of the proverb, "All is not gold that glitters."

The pupil is to use the following propositions as subjects to be illustrated by proverbs, as in the above model.

Propositions to be illustrated by Proverbs.

1. The strictest attention should be paid to early education.
2. It is unwise to take trifles to heart.
3. Let us attend to one thing at a time.
4. We should profit by the present opportunity.
5. Important measures should be well considered.
6. Some good may be found in everything.
7. No pleasure is unmixed with evil.
8. We should not be over confident.
9. No one should attempt a task for which he is unfit.
10. Age brings experience.
11. You may judge of a man's character by his companions.
12. The imperfect should not accuse others of imperfection.
13. Be careful in small matters.
14. Do not talk of what you do not understand.
15. Every one should look after his own business.
16. It is useless to bewail our misfortunes.
17. Desultory study is of no avail.
18. Bad example spreads rapidly.
19. The most wonderful works may be accomplished by time and perseverance.
20. Defects should be promptly remedied.

IX. SAYINGS OR QUOTATIONS.

It is a common practice with writers to quote passages, or make extracts, from authors of acknowledged

merit; either to throw some light on their own meaning, or support their view of the question before them. This, however, should not be done too frequently by a young writer, as it will partially interfere with that independence of thought which every one should endeavour to attain. Neither is it always necessary that the passage quoted be in the exact words of the original author; it will be sufficient if the substance of his meaning be given, or even if a passing allusion be made to his general views. But on no occasion should these extracts be lengthy; as this would call away the reader's attention from the subject, and also detract considerably from the writer's originality. Those who are well acquainted with Lord Bacon's "Essays," Shakspeare's Plays, or Pope's and Wordsworth's Poems, can never be at a loss for quotations on a great variety of subjects.

The model below will illustrate this form of argument:—

MODEL.

Given proposition . . *There is some good in everything.*

The natural tendency to extremes from which few minds are altogether free, has led many people to imagine that some conditions in life are wholly and unqualifiedly evil. But this is an error; it seems a law of nature that all things should be a mixture of good and evil. Indeed, what is called good, means that in which good preponderates; and what is generally termed evil, means whatever we find possessing evil qualities which more than counterbalance the good. Thus, the best characters have their defects;

and the very worst are not without some redeeming quality. Poverty itself, though certainly not desirable, may yet be turned to account by the virtuous and wise ; for as Shakspeare says : —

“ Sweet are the uses of adversity ;
Which, like a toad, ugly and venomous,
Bears yet a precious jewel in her forehead.”

The following propositions are to be illustrated by quotations or allusions : —

1. We should encourage a philanthropic feeling.
2. Indulgence in violent passion weakens the reason.
3. When occupied, we are never lonely.
4. A smattering of knowledge is worthless.
5. Defer not a duty which should be done to-day.
6. Violent changes are never lasting.
7. There should be moderation in all things.
8. Everything should be done at its proper time.
9. If you wish to succeed, help yourself.
10. Both good and evil example are infectious.
11. Be not over familiar.
12. Music has a cheering and civilising influence.
13. Beware of the first steps to vice.
14. Reputation is more precious than wealth.
15. It is easier to preach than to practise.
16. Men are continually deceived by appearances.
17. The things of this world are fleeting and insignificant.
18. There is an end to the greatest misfortunes.
19. Beware of a slanderous tongue.
20. Perseverance will overcome the greatest difficulties.

X. ANALOGY.

Reasoning by analogy is drawing conclusions about one subject from its resemblance to another. This form of argument is rather illustrative than conclusive. It is often employed with good effect to explain our meaning more clearly to the reader ; but it is scarcely sufficient to produce conviction. Analogy means a likeness, in a certain respect, between two things, which in other respects may be quite different. There is an analogy between the sovereign of a country and the father of a family. They are both rulers. The one stands in the same relation to his subjects as the other does to his children ; but beyond this one point the likeness fails, for in all other respects they may be different from each other. This form of reasoning is frequently adopted in arguing on moral or practical questions ; but we should take great care that our analogies be well founded, and that we do not argue concerning two things as if they were alike in all respects, because they resemble each other in one point.

The following paragraph is modelled upon the principle of analogy : —

MODEL.

Given proposition *Perfect equality is impossible.*

Obedience is one of those principles by which society is held together. Take it away, and the whole fabric falls to the ground. Without it, none of the business of life could be carried on. There would be neither king nor subject, commander nor soldier,

master nor servant. The opinion that there should be no difference of rank in society is about as absurd as to expect that all trees or all mountains should be of the same size, or that all men should be of the same height. No ; Providence, for the wisest purposes, has created an infinite variety in external nature, and most undoubtedly intended a similar variety to exist in the moral world.

The propositions in the following list are to form the subjects of short paragraphs, and are to be argued upon as in the above model.

Propositions to be illustrated by Analogy.

1. Human life is brief and transitory.
2. The barbarians invaded the Roman Empire.
3. All that's bright must fade.
4. Nothing could appease his anger.
5. His head was turned by his success.
6. He had lost all his former tastes.
7. The conversation flagged.
8. The cholera appeared in the country.
9. The poor child died of a fever.
10. She was deeply afflicted.
11. The lady was gorgeously dressed.
12. The gentleman has great powers of conversation.
13. He is of a most benevolent disposition.
14. My friend was in high spirits at the news.
15. A precocious genius is seldom lasting.
16. There are limits to human knowledge.
17. The stately ship cleaves the calm waters.
18. Repeated attempts will at length succeed.
19. Treat others as you would be treated yourself.
20. Indolence corrodes the mind.

XL. FABLES.

Another form of reasoning is where the writer refers to, or quotes, a fable in support of his position. Fables are short stories in which animals or inanimate objects carry on the action, and which convey some moral lesson. The principle "example before precept" is here literally fulfilled, for the *example* is found in the story of the fable, and the *precept* in the moral which follows it. In the fable of the "Hare and the Tortoise," we are taught the superiority of steady and determined perseverance over a brilliant but irregular genius; and from the fable of the "Dog and Shadow," we draw a lesson against greediness.

The following model will show how this form of reasoning may be practised:—

MODEL.

Given proposition *Listen not to flattery.*

There is nothing more pernicious to the character than to listen to flattery. It increases our vanity, gives us a false idea of ourselves, and becomes an insurmountable barrier to all improvement. For it is obviously impossible for one who believes all the fulsome adulation poured into his ear, to make any progress either in knowledge or virtue; and he is sure at length to fall a victim to one who will profit by his folly. Had not the crow lent a willing ear to the artful insinuations of the fox, she would not have had to mourn, when too late, the consequences of her silly vanity.

Propositions to be supported by reference to Fables.

1. A known liar is never believed.
2. We must take the consequences of disregarding good advice.
3. Honesty is the best policy.
4. Every one should provide for a future emergency.
5. Industry is the only sure road to wealth.
6. Envy makes ourselves as well as others miserable.
7. It is mean and cowardly to insult the unfortunate.
8. Great boasters are generally great cowards.
9. Persuasion is better than force.
10. Affectation is sure to meet with ridicule.
11. A comfortable competency is preferable to splendid affluence.
12. We should never despise even the weakest.
13. Innocence falls an easy victim to tyranny.
14. Consider well the consequences of a change.
15. It is no merit to abstain from vices we cannot practise.
16. Those who claim more than their due will get less than their due.
17. We should not be over sanguine.
18. Do not attempt a task beyond your strength.
19. Heaven assists the industrious.
20. Be not dazzled by a brilliant appearance.

XII. EXAMPLES.

When we reason from examples, we adduce cases, drawn either from public or private life, in support of the proposition we desire to prove. It is better, when it can be done, to accumulate examples, as the greater the number of them that can be brought to

support our opinion, the more likely are we to produce conviction on our reader's mind. By this form of reasoning, Mr. Aiken endeavours to show that wars were more frequent, destructive, and cruel before the invention of fire-arms. With this view, he cites examples of the wars among the states of Greece, those of Rome, the innumerable attacks of the northern barbarians on the Roman Empire, and the millions of human beings that fell in the Crusades.

The following model will illustrate this form of reasoning : —

MODEL.

Given proposition . . . { *A literary age follows some political struggle.*

It has been frequently remarked, that the period of the highest literary glory of civilised nations is generally found to follow close on some remarkable or portentous achievements in commerce or in war. Among the ancient Greeks, the combination of great literary names in the age of Pericles follows the defeat of the Persians. The Roman age of Augustus, when that mighty nation was resting from her conquests, produced the same galaxy of genius. In the same way, the famous literary age of Louis XIV. was certainly prepared, if not produced, by the religious wars of the Reformation, and after the national enthusiasm had been excited by the success of the French arms in Germany and Flanders. In our own case, a gigantic revolution had been accomplished. The intellect of England had been engaged in a violent struggle for religious liberty, and the nation now started on its race of poetical immortality.

Propositions to be illustrated by Example.

1. True genius is always accompanied by judgment.
2. All historians are in some degree prejudiced.
3. To gain fame, hard labour is indispensable.
4. Without sacrifice, there is no virtue.
5. The more we have, the more we desire.
6. Some labour is paid higher than other.
7. Some habits are injurious to bodily health.
8. Many advantages result from the invention of machinery.
9. The favour of princes is not to be trusted.
10. Every language has its peculiar expressions.
11. Every relation of life has its duties.
12. Ancient Greece produced many great dramatists.
13. The results of some battles have been particularly important.
14. The drama is an early form of literature.
15. All literary nations have had their fabulists.
16. Literature flourished in Queen Elizabeth's reign.
17. Napoleon was surrounded by a brilliant staff.
18. Several wars of succession took place in the 18th century.
19. The library contains several classes of books.
20. Mary, Queen of Scots, was noted for her misfortunes.

XIII. INTERROGATION.

We reason by interrogation when we ask questions, not for information, but to give force to our opinions, and thus impress them more deeply on others. This is done in several ways ; sometimes it makes an assertion more emphatic, as when we appeal to the feelings

or common sense of others, to persuade them of a truth. Sometimes it removes an objection, or brings forward points of comparison, and thus shows the superiority of one thing over another. In such cases, the conclusion is not expressed, but is left to be drawn by the reader; so that though accomplished by different means, the effect is the same; as: Can we doubt that honesty is preferable to fraud or deceit? Would any man of common sense choose to live in continual fear of detection and its consequences rather than pass his days in the calm consciousness of rectitude? Is it possible to conceive that one whose heart is not thoroughly depraved, or whose moral sense is not deeply corrupted, could deliberately make such a choice?

The following model may serve to illustrate this form of writing:—

MODEL.

Given proposition . . . { *God directs and supports
the universe.*

Who continually supports and governs this stupendous system? Who preserves ten thousand times ten thousand worlds in perpetual harmony? Who enables them always to observe such time, and obey such laws, as are most exquisitely adapted for the perfection of the wondrous whole? They cannot preserve and direct themselves; for they were created, and must, therefore, be dependent. How then can they be so actuated and directed, but by the unceasing energy of the Great Supreme?

Propositions to be supported by Interrogation.

1. Waste not your affection in useless lamentations.
2. The Gospel provides a remedy for all human evils.
3. The miser is devoid of all sympathy.
4. The life of man is a vain shadow.
5. The soldiers performed the part of gallant men.
6. No man is completely happy in this world.
7. Death is the season which brings our affections to the test.
8. Reflection is the guide which leads to truth.
9. We should make the best use of our time.
10. Conversation is an agreeable mode of information.
11. No one can tell how long he may live.
12. It is dangerous to trust even the best of men with too much power.
13. These atrocities call for the most indignant reprehension.
14. Money should not be withdrawn from circulation.
15. None have a juster right than the English to boast of their progress.
16. Mathematical studies are essential to a good education.
17. By the power of language we are enabled to be useful to others.
18. Knowledge is better than riches.
19. Education promotes the cause of religion.
20. History is a storehouse of universal knowledge.

As a further exercise in argument, the learner is required to write paragraphs on each of the following propositions, supporting them by several forms of ar-

gument, and explaining the forms he adopts for that purpose ; as :

MODEL.

Given proposition { *Idle reports should not be repeated.*

Idle reports should not be repeated ; for they are then likely to seriously injure many a reputation. The act grows into a habit, and if the habit become confirmed, whose fair name will be secure from slander ! As one drop of acid will affect a large quantity of water, so will a whole society become tainted by the idle talking of one thoughtless gossip.

Here the first proposition is maintained by showing the consequences or effects of idle talk. The more serious consequences are then shown in the case of its becoming a habit, and the form of the argument is by exclamation. Lastly, the third form of support is by analogy. As the drop of acid is to the water, so is the idle talker to a whole community.

Let the following propositions be argued in various ways, as in the above example :—

Propositions to be maintained by several Arguments.

1. We think that this question should be reconsidered.
2. I believe this statement to be substantially correct.
3. This author's style is exceedingly admired.
4. The reign of Queen Anne was celebrated as a literary age.
5. We must not dispute about tastes.
6. Hypocrisy is the homage which vice renders to virtue.
7. The only things of which we need be ashamed, are sin and ignorance.

8. "Practice makes perfect."
9. There is a great difference between practice and precept.
10. Those who perform services to their country should not go unrewarded.
11. History contributes to divest us of our prejudices.
12. Poverty raises up the arts.
13. Difference of opinion should not be considered an evil.
14. Truth is said to lie in a well.
15. Apprehension often interferes with duty.
16. This plan was unsuccessful.
17. Praise should be given judiciously.
18. The whole campaign was a series of defeats.
19. John was the worst king that ever sat on the English throne.
20. Few are wholly without ambition.
21. Self-indulgence produces irresolution and general weakness of character.
22. Some nations have been celebrated for their delicacy of taste.
23. A good critic looks at both sides of the question.
24. Every one should give something to the poor.
25. Ignorance and crime go hand in hand.
26. The selfish are never happy.
27. There is a difference between patience and apathy.
28. It is difficult to say great things in few and simple words.
29. We should never anticipate misfortunes.
30. Every station has its trials.
31. Clearness is the first quality of style.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS ON PART III.

1. What is the difference between an assertion and an argument ?
2. What propositions require no proof ?
3. Mention some of the sources of argument.
4. What is meant by arguing by enumeration ?
5. How may the principle of "contrast" be used as a source of argument ?
6. What is arguing by explanation ?
7. In what cases may the principle of "cause and effect" be applied to support a statement ?
8. Explain the form of argument by experience.
9. How may history be used in illustration or in proof of assertions ?
10. What other forms of argument may be occasionally applied ?
11. For what purpose is analogy generally applied in reasoning ?
12. How is the form of interrogation applicable in support of an opinion ?

PART IV.

SUBJECTS.

SUBJECTS FOR COMPOSITION.

SUBJECTS for composition have various forms. Sometimes a single word may be chosen for this purpose, as Order, Education, Philosophy; another form is where a general proposition is made a subject for writing, as, "The study of art should not be neglected;" or a proverb, as, "Fortune favours the brave." A third is when we are desired to write "On the advantages of a college education," or "On the evils produced by bad example," &c.

In all these forms of composition, the writer should begin with some general introductory remarks, which will naturally lead to the subject, and prevent the ungraceful and abrupt effect that would be produced by plunging at once into the question proposed. A definition is not always necessary; but if the subject is to be treated in a special or particular sense, it is indispensable that we explain that meaning, in order to prevent any misapprehension on the part of the reader. This will appear especially necessary when we remember that many subjects may be treated in a

great variety of ways. For example, *Education* is a word of wide acceptance, and might be made the subject of as many different themes or exercises as it has meanings:—1. The process of strengthening the reasoning powers; 2. The cultivation of the taste; 3. Moral training; 4. Bodily exercise, &c. Opinions to be given and maintained on these different meanings of the word would obviously be distinct from each other.

In writing a simple theme, our opinions should be merely general, and we should bear in mind that the whole object of the composition is to prove the truth of those opinions. The previous chapter on “Forms of Argument” will be of assistance in this part of the exercise; but it may be as well to mention that it is not necessary—if indeed possible—to apply all the forms of argument there explained to every subject; and that in arranging the arguments, it is advisable that they rise in power as the writer proceeds, so that the strongest be reserved for the last. Thus, the accumulation of well-founded arguments, and their continual increase of power, will produce the desired effect of convincing the reader of the correctness of our views. When the arguments are thus arranged, the whole theme should be brought to a close by summing up,—that is, touching briefly upon some of the leading arguments already adduced.

The following theme on avarice will perhaps more fully illustrate these observations.

ON AVARICE.

(*Introduction.*) Of all subjects of thought, the human character is perhaps the most difficult and perplexing

to understand. It is made up of so many and such contradictory qualities, and these are intermingled so closely and in such different proportions, that it requires all the shrewdness and sagacity of the highest intellect to unravel these perplexities so as clearly to expose the whole character to view. Of many dispositions, it can scarcely be said that they are positively either good or bad,—the various feelings and passions of our nature being so blended, that it is difficult to determine whether the good or the evil preponderates.

(*Definition.*) But whenever we meet with a man devoted to the accumulation of money, and living for that sole purpose, (*opinion*) we unhesitatingly condemn such a disposition as unworthy a human being, and pernicious to general society. Now this is not a particular opinion ; it is one held by a very large majority of mankind, and from which few, if any, will be found to dissent.

How comes it that men seem universally — and, as it were, instinctively—to condemn this vice? By what internal feeling are they urged invariably to abhor the practices of the miser, and shun all intercourse with him? (*1st argument: the nature of things.*) The cause seems to lie deeply rooted in the nature of humanity. We feel, without any direct process of reasoning, that such a man is wanting in all those emotions and affections we naturally look for in human beings. (*2nd argument: effects on self.*) He is not like ordinary men ; he has no benevolence, no kindness, no charity, no sympathy. He takes no interest in his species, and is equally indifferent to strangers and his more immediate relations.

The truth is that his whole soul is absorbed in the one devouring passion—money-getting. For this he sacrifices all the better affections of his nature ; he hardens his heart against all the claims of relationship, friendship, and love, and he lives an isolated being in the midst of his fellows, bound to this earth by no other tie than that iron chain of avarice which corrodes his whole soul, and rivets him night and day to his beloved treasures.

(3rd *argument* : *effects on others*.) But, to say no more of the wretched condition of the miser's mind, we may consider the injury he does to society. He withdraws large sums of money from circulation. This is of itself a great evil. Money, like knowledge, does no good till it is spread. It is as injurious to the best interests of mankind to accumulate and hoard riches, as it would be if every discoverer of a principle, or inventor of a machine, were to keep the secret in his own breast, and not reveal it to the world. Nothing can be clearer than that, in such a state of things, it would be impossible for civilisation to advance, or for any improvement to take place in the social condition of the world.

(*Causes*.) This vice, fortunately for society, is of comparatively rare occurrence. It is seldom found in youth, and not very often in the middle period of life, but is almost wholly confined to old age. It may be difficult to explain why it should be so. Perhaps this passion attacks those who have outlived all their other affections, and is the last evidence of that "necessity to love" which would appear to be an essential part of man's nature. Sometimes it may be the offspring of a laudable economy, which is allowed to degenerate into

parsimony, and which at length ends in that terrible condition we have endeavoured to describe in the earlier part of this paper.

(*Conclusion.*) Surely, then, no one can, without shuddering, contemplate the possibility of being brought into such a state. The very term "miser" implies misery. "Nemo miser felix." It is impossible for a miser to be happy; and as happiness is our being's end and aim, every one must see that it would be the height of folly to endeavour to obtain it by such means. Let us desire wealth not for selfish, but for benevolent, purposes — to do good to others; and if we have it, let us put it to its proper use, but never fall into the wicked absurdity of imagining that the possession of hoarded riches will add one iota to our real welfare.

The following sketches may be of assistance to the writer in his first attempts at composition in general subjects.

MORAL SUBJECTS.

I. ON ANGER.

Introduction. 1. Human passions — enumerate — benevolent and malevolent. To which class does anger belong?

2. Origin of anger — temperament — habits, &c.
Describe degrees of anger.

3. General opinion — passions to be controlled.

4. Effects on ourselves, weakness of intellect — madness; on others, injustice — bodily injury, &c.

5. All excess must be wrong (explain).

6. Mortification — humiliation — scandal — bad example.
7. Virtue consists in control, not in extinction, of feeling.
8. *Conclusion.*

II. ON IDLENESS.

Introduction. Activity a universal principle—even in inanimate objects (explain).

1. We *must* do something ; if not right, wrong. Action must be directed.
2. *Causes of idleness.* Want of steadiness of character ; neglect of the cultivation of the mind in youth, &c.
3. *Results of idleness.* Positive ignorance, or imperfect knowledge, a smattering (go into particulars).
4. *Contrast.* Show the difference between an idle and an occupied man.
5. *Analogy.* Iron will corrode, stagnant water will putrefy, &c.
6. Do the indolent perform their duties ?
7. Is it possible for the idle to make a reputation ?
8. *Conclusion.* What inference is to be drawn ?

III. ON FALSEHOOD.

Introduction. A natural antipathy between the true and false.

1. Various forms of falsehood — cheating — fraud — the lie — equivocation — prevarication (explain).
2. Falsehood held in universal detestation by the good.
3. The false are base, mean, dishonourable ; the truthful, open, candid, frank, &c.
4. No trust or reliance can be placed, either in word or deed, in the false.

5. Motive for falsehood — always bad ; to gratify selfishness — to conceal faults, &c.
6. Avoid beginnings — exaggerations — white lies, &c.
7. Does harm both to ourselves and others ; bad example ; makes others distrustful, &c.
8. *Conclusion.* Motives for avoiding falsehood, &c.

IV. ON PRIDE.

Introduction. Vices frequently the excess of proper feelings. Prodigality springs from liberality ; avarice from economy, &c.

1. In what pride consists, and whence its origin.
2. *Arguments against it.* Its injustice — it refuses to recognise the merit of others.
3. It destroys sympathy ; removes us from intercourse. The proud solitary.
4. Universally disliked ; when absent, the jest of society.
5. The proud cannot be happy — pride engenders a thousand miseries in the heart.
6. The source of many vices (enumerate).
7. Pride incompatible with improvement.
8. *Conclusion.* Self-confidence desirable — but carry it not to excess — do justice both to yourselves and others.

V. ON CONTENTMENT.

Introduction. Difference between the happy and the unhappy depends much on self — the feelings to be cherished to make ourselves happy.

1. Why contentment is such a blessing.
2. It removes envy, jealousy, malice, &c. — all tormenting passions.
3. Not annoyed by reverses; adapts itself easily to changes of fortune.
4. *Contrast.* Condition of the discontented.
5. Describe the feelings consequent upon contentment.
6. All the wealth and power of this world insufficient to satisfy (therefore?).
7. "Not he who has most, but he who desires least, is happy."
8. *Conclusion.* Motives for contentment.

VI. ON AFFECTATION.

Introduction. Many failings which interfere with the improvement of character (enumerate).

1. What is affectation? its origin, its various forms, and at what period of life is it most frequently found?
2. *Arguments against.* It is dishonest — imposture a species of falsehood.
3. It is unwise and ridiculous — it never succeeds.
4. Contrast it with truthful simplicity.
5. Unnatural and artificial.
6. Leads to positive falsehood — the beginning of a great evil.
7. Troublesome and difficult to support a false character.
8. *Conclusion.* Be what you would seem.

VII. ON LUXURY.

Introduction. Analogy between nations and individuals — similar causes produce similar effects (explain).

1. What is luxury?— and what may be its causes?
2. State its effects on the mind.
3. The bad example it sets to others.
4. Incompatible with health either of mind or body.
5. Leads to extravagance, ruin of fortune.
6. Historical examples — Lucullus, Cleopatra, &c.
7. Fall of Rome — French Revolution. — How connected with these events?
8. *Conclusion.* Motives for its avoidance.

VIII. ON PLEASURE.

Introduction. All naturally seek pleasure ; but few understand in what it consists.

1. Pleasure not business, but recreation from business.
2. False sources of pleasure ; excitement, change of scene, accumulation of wealth, eating and drinking, &c.
3. The effects of such — injurious to the body ; wearisome to the mind.
4. Loss of time involved in such practices.
5. Real sources of pleasure ; practice of virtue — improvement of intellect — occupation, &c.
6. Kindness to others ; assistance to the needy, &c.
7. Moderation in all our actions.
8. *Conclusion.* Temperance — a clear conscience — attention to business — “mens sana in corpore sano.”

IX. ON MERCY.

Introduction. Carry no principle too far ; justice must be tempered with mercy.

1. We all require mercy, and therefore should exercise it.
2. It has a powerful influence—binds others to us.
3. A certain proof of goodness of disposition.
4. Shown in our judgment of character, in our conduct towards animals, &c.
5. It assists in reforming the wicked.
6. Shakspeare's beautiful lines in the "Merchant of Venice : " "The quality of mercy is not strained," &c.
7. It fosters all the affections of our nature, softens bad and violent passions.
8. Concluding remarks.

X. ON CHARITY.

Introduction. Various classes of virtues — cardinal, social, &c. (explain).

1. Many words used in too confined a sense ; the extensive application of the word "charity."
2. Alms-giving — assistance to the needy — consolation to the afflicted.
3. Difference between an active and a passive charity — make allowances for human imperfections.
4. Be not inclined to think ill.
5. The effects of the exercise of charity on ourselves and others.
6. To what faults or qualities is charity opposed ?

7. Many charitable in one sense — not in another — what is the test ?
8. *Conclusion.* Cultivate the feeling in every sense — the wider our charity, the greater our sympathy.

XI. ON REVENGE.

Introduction. What feelings elevate, and what degrade the moral character.

1. How indignation differs from revenge.
2. Upon what grounds we may argue against revenge — produces dissatisfaction — barbarous — unchristian.
3. A proof of a little and weak mind.
4. The noblest revenge — to return good for evil.
5. The effects of this passion — historically.
6. The discord and enmity it perpetuates. — Italian — Corsican.
7. Cause of misery and unhappiness in private life.
8. *Conclusion.* Motives for forgiveness — all imperfect.

XII. ON FEAR.

Introduction. Great variety of temperament — some born with qualities which others must acquire — men naturally bolder than women.

1. The inconveniences and disadvantages of fear.
2. Useful in making us provide against difficulties.
3. Difference between a wholesome and a silly fear.
4. Can a coward become brave ?
5. The necessity to overcome violent fear.

6. The effects of a panic among soldiers.
7. The wicked tormented with fears; the virtuous brave.
8. *Conclusion.* Motives for resisting the influence of fear.

INTELLECTUAL SUBJECTS.

I. ON KNOWLEDGE.

Introduction. Man intellectual (explain); information gained from many sources (enumerate).

1. No sort of knowledge to be despised.
2. Some of a higher order—labour of intellect required.
3. Knowledge should be communicated and made practical.
4. The influence it gives to its possessor. (“Knowledge is power.”)
5. “Those that think must govern those that toil.”
6. What knowledge has done for mankind.
7. A natural desire to discover inherent in man.
8. *Conclusion.* Incentives to the acquisition of knowledge.

II. ON ORDER.

Introduction. A natural law; always worthy of imitation.

1. In what order consists: system, method, arrangement.
2. Found in all parts of nature—an essential ingredient: day, night, the seasons, &c.

3. This is to be imitated : arrangement assists the understanding ; method facilitates the acquisition of knowledge (give cases).
4. Effects of personal order ; affects all our affairs ; books, studies, dress, occupations, &c.
5. Order produces a great saving of time (explain).
6. Show the effects of disorder in external things.
7. Irregularity produces impatience, irritability, dislike for learning, &c.
8. *Conclusion.* Motives for being orderly—time gained—progress made, &c.

III. ON MATHEMATICS.

Introduction. Different uses of different studies ; some strengthen the reasoning powers, some cultivate the taste (explain).

1. To which class do mathematics belong ?
2. *Effects* of mathematical study—induces habit of thought.
3. Prepares the mind for reasoning on practical matters.
4. Makes us cautious in receiving as true what cannot be proved.
5. A remedy against credulity ; modifies an impulsive nature.
6. Practically useful in all sciences ; astronomy, chemistry, engineering, &c.
7. Assists us to argue clearly.
8. *Conclusion.* The most satisfactory of all studies admits of no difference of opinion.

IV. ON REASONING.

Introduction. Difference between human beings and the lower animals. Principles of action.

1. What is understood by reasoning?
2. Are there any truths which do not require proof?
3. What effect has this study on the mind?
4. Show how this effect is communicated to others.
5. State some of the various ways in which correct reasoning may be found useful.
6. Mention some of the forms of argument, and explain them.
7. What should be the great object of the exercise of our reasoning powers?
8. *Conclusion.* How ought we to estimate this privilege—avoid its abuse? &c.

V. ON ATTENTION.

Introduction. The various intellectual faculties—for what purpose given (enumerate and explain).

1. What is attention, and how is it employed?
2. Indispensable to the acquisition of knowledge.
3. Show the necessary consequences of inattention.
4. Memory depends mainly on the exertion of attention.
5. Attention a habit that must be acquired; otherwise
6. Easily practised upon common objects; daily observation, &c.
7. All great men have had strong memories; this acquired by attention.
8. *Conclusion.* Take an interest in a pursuit, and you will soon pay attention.

VI. ON TASTE.

Introduction. The various views which may be taken of a human being (enumerate).

1. One of these — a capacity of being pleasurably, or otherwise, affected by external things.
2. This power—taste—is it inherent or acquired ?
3. Difference between a delicate and a correct taste.
4. Applied in all matters of art,—poetry, music, painting, composition.
5. Cultivation of taste modifies the matter-of-fact.
6. A great embellishment of life. Refers to beauty, proportion, form, grace, colour, tone, &c.
7. Importance of cultivating taste in the young.
8. *Conclusion.* General views on this subject.

VII. ON LEARNING.

Introduction. The many forms and sources of knowledge.

1. In what does learning consist, and where are we to look for it ?
2. What is meant by the “classics ?”
3. Show that there are modern as well as ancient classics.
4. Why is this study so strongly recommended ?
5. Why should book-knowledge be superior to many other forms ?
6. Who are the most learned people in Europe ? and for what are we indebted to them ?
7. To what institutions of this country do we look for learning ?

8. *Conclusion.* Greek, Latin, mathematics, modern languages, history, geography, &c.

VIII. ON LITERARY CRITICISM.

Introduction. To enjoy properly, we must have the power of discriminating and analysing.

1. Divisions of a subject to be criticised—not judge of the whole, but take the parts—separately.
2. *Plot.* Simple, well constructed—easily understood—action must move on naturally.
3. *Episodes.* Not too many, or they disturb the action: they must grow out of the subject.
4. *Characters.* Well drawn—consistent—true to nature—gradually developed, &c.
5. *Language.* Suited to the characters—generally clear, concise, flowing.
6. *Figures.* Forcible—well applied—illustrative, and uniform in expression.
7. *Moral.* A healthy tone—a good lesson—true delineation, &c.
8. *Conclusion.* Critical examination points out defects, improves taste, and raises our appreciation of the true and beautiful.

IX. ON SCIENCE.

Introduction. Nature full of wonders; these gradually unfolded as they are discovered by philosophers.

1. Principles and laws of nature immutable and universal.
2. All art is built upon these principles.

3. Difference between the abstract and practical sciences.
4. Arithmetic, algebra, geometry, &c. (abstract); agriculture, chemistry, surveying, &c. (practical).
5. The application of science to the wants of social life.
6. Various divisions of physical science — natural philosophy.
7. The natural and proper effect of the study of science: "Look through Nature up to Nature's God."
8. *Conclusion.* The study inexhaustible—the spirit in which it should be followed.

X. ON ASSOCIATION.

Introduction. Many sources of pleasure and pain. Reflections on past scenes, &c. Ideas never come singly, but in a train.

1. The power of linking ideas together, so as to produce a train of thought.
2. A great assistance to the memory: technical memories formed upon this principle.
3. Many causes of association; scenes, music, faces, even tastes (explain).
4. Whether association causes more pleasure or pain.
5. Pleasures of memory — pleasures of hope.
6. How it happens that contrast is a frequent source of association.
7. False associations — beware of forming them: because two qualities may be found in the same person, this is no proof that they are always found together, or that the one causes the other.
8. *Conclusion.* The general advantages of this power.

XI. ON CURIOSITY.

Introduction. A desire for knowledge is a strong principle in the human mind (explain).

1. The term "curiosity" used in two senses—a well- and an ill-directed curiosity.
2. The one is an abuse of the other (explain).
3. Some things not proper, other things not expedient, for us to know.
4. State and contrast the effects of both these feelings.
5. Science and literature both much indebted to this desire.
6. In what cases is an idle curiosity shown?
7. On what subjects should we encourage this feeling?
8. *Conclusion.* Take care not to abuse the principle. Let us wish to know what is worth knowing.

XII. ON PHILOSOPHY.

Introduction. Some subjects much more extensive than others; this embraces everything—universal knowledge.

1. Philosophy—an inquiry into the nature of things.
2. Two divisions—physical and mental (explain).
3. Mention some branches of physical philosophy, and explain them.
4. Metaphysics—an inquiry into the nature of the mind and its faculties (explain).
5. Which of these two studies is the more difficult, natural or metaphysical philosophy?

6. Philosophy of the ancient Greeks. Mention some of their absurdities and their systems.
7. Philosophy of the middle ages—astrology, alchemy &c.
8. *Conclusion.* A noble study; but let it be well directed.

LITERARY SUBJECTS.

I. ON LITERATURE.

Introduction. Studies which increase our knowledge of human nature hold a high rank: political history, biography, poetry, &c.

1. Literature—the lasting monument of a nation's mind—closely connected with the history of a people.
2. Indication of passing events—national excitement—revolution—religious or political struggles, &c.
3. Various forms of literature: epic poetry—ballads—the drama—history, biography, fiction, philosophy, &c.
4. The abuses of literature; various merits of writers.
5. Every phase of a nation's existence indicated in the passing literature of the day—ballads, journals, periodicals, reviews, &c.
6. Ages of English literature, and what produced them.
7. A general knowledge of European literature, a necessary part of every good education.
8. *Conclusion.* The variety, extent, and advantages of this study.

II. ON HISTORY.

Introduction. Many forms of study, some more popular than others. History included in every system of education.

1. Why the study of history should be so interesting.
2. In what does its utility consist?
3. Something more than a mere list of facts. Causes, effects, motives, &c.
4. Show what moral lessons may be drawn from history.
5. Mention other studies which are involved in the study of history.
6. Divisions of history: for what purpose. Sacred and profane, ancient and modern, &c.
7. With what history should we be best acquainted?
8. *Conclusion.* The philosophy of history—advantages of this study.

III. ON BIOGRAPHY.

Introduction. Many forms of history—biography one: history in miniature.

1. Show the special uses of biography; private character, mental and moral.
2. How is biography less difficult to understand than history?—attention concentrated on the subject—less distraction.
3. A better example for a rule of conduct in private life.
4. Can we depend on the truth of biography?
5. What is autobiography, and what reliance can be placed on this form of literature?

6. Biography perpetuates the memory of great men—makes us emulate their virtues, &c.
7. Characters whose lives have been written: soldiers, sailors, jurists, divines, poets, philosophers, philanthropists, literary and scientific men, &c.
8. *Conclusion.* Great variety—wide scope for imitation and improvement.

IV. ON POETRY.

Introduction. Various forms of language. Two great divisions—poetry and prose.

1. A distinction to be made between the outward appearance and the essence of poetry.
2. Appearance—verse, metre, rhyme, &c. (explain).
3. Essence—figurative language—whence does this originate?
4. A natural tendency in the mind to believe that inanimate objects have the power to feel and act.
5. Imagination—the power of throwing expression and feeling into such objects.
6. Divisions of poetry—hymns, ballads, epic poems, dramas, lyric, descriptive, &c.
7. Explain the above forms of poetry.
8. *Conclusion.* Poetry deserves to be cultivated; it refines, elevates, embellishes, &c.

V. ON LANGUAGE.

Introduction. Many significations of this word; always implies the power of conveying ideas to one another.

1. Two great divisions of language—spoken and written.

2. The uses and advantages of each division.
3. How writing is an improvement on speech.
4. Every civilised nation has a literary language (barbarous dialects not to be considered as languages).
5. How a language improves.
6. At one time, no written language in Europe but Latin. Why?
7. Advantages derived from the study of various languages ; their beauties and defects.
8. *Conclusion.* Our *own* language of most importance to us ; but others must be studied, if only to understand our own.

VI. ON THE GREEK AND LATIN LANGUAGES.

Introduction. Among the nations of antiquity, the Greeks and Romans the only civilised.

1. Hence their language classical, because it produced such great writers.
2. Greek : plastic, strong, suited to all subjects ; deep and powerful, yet light and airy, graphic and lofty.
3. Latin : beautifully adapted to history — dignified, powerful in satire, impressive.
4. Difference in construction between ancient and modern languages (inflection).
5. The inestimable advantages of a classical education.
6. But no studies should be pursued exclusively.
7. The works of the ancient classics among the most wonderful monuments of human genius.
8. *Conclusion.* General advantages : always a source of delight ; never can be taken from us.

VII. ON MODERN LANGUAGES.

Introduction. Among the various branches of education, modern languages are prominent.

1. Which are they? English, French, German, Italian, Spanish.
2. Various motives for studying these languages.
3. Advantages derived from them : — merchants, travellers, general students, &c.
4. Opportunities afforded of judging of differences in national character by idioms, &c.
5. Power of reading classical authors in the original — translations always more or less imperfect.
6. Classification of modern languages into Romance and Teutonic.
7. French, Italian, Spanish (founded on Latin) Romance; German, Dutch, English (Teutonic).
8. *Conclusion.* Interest and numerous advantages resulting from this sort of study.

VIII. ON VERSIFICATION.

Introduction. Two grand divisions of language, prose and verse (explain the difference).

1. Mention the essentials of verse.
2. What is meant by accent?
3. Difference between ancient and modern systems of versification.
4. Divisions of a verse : metre, feet, &c.
5. Iambic, trochaic, dactylic, anapæstic (explain).
6. Mention in what forms of poetry the above metres are used.

7. Is verse a natural or an artificial form of language?
8. *Conclusion.* What advantages has verse over prose? &c.

IX. ON FABLES.

Introduction. Many forms of teaching: by questions, by precept, by example, &c.

1. Many advantages in teaching by fables — a fable what?
2. Who was the most celebrated fabulist among the ancients, and what imitators has he had in modern times?
3. A fable originally spoken: how was the lesson imparted?
4. Show how fables contain both example and precept.
5. The difference between a fable and a parable.
6. The efficacy of fables as a means of moral instruction.
7. Pleasing to every age.
8. *Conclusion.* Other forms of instruction are now adopted; but none to be despised. The importance of this subject proved by the many great writers who have treated of it.

X. ON PRINTING.

Introduction. Various appearances of language: spoken, written, printed.

1. Printing, when invented? — by whom? — and by whom introduced into England?
2. An immense improvement upon writing: show how.

3. What impulse did it give to the human intellect?—how long it preceded the Reformation.
4. How printing was connected with the revival of learning in Europe.
5. Difficulties the early printers had to contend against.
6. How they were received in France by Louis XI.
7. The Aldi in Venice — Caxton in England, &c.
8. *Conclusion.* The great perfection to which the art has now been raised — rapidity of execution — stereotype, &c.

XI. ON NEWSPAPERS.

Introduction. The natural desire of mankind to perpetuate their deeds to posterity.

1. Various forms in which this desire has manifested itself — ballads, epics, chronicles, histories, &c.
2. Newspapers among the latter — a current record of events.
3. At first, merely a statement of facts — afterwards, remarks and comments on the conduct of public men and their measures.
4. When newspapers were first established in England.
5. The influence of the press, public opinion, &c.
6. Redress of grievances, reform of abuses, &c.
7. Freedom of the press, what? — and how limited?
8. *Conclusion.* Reflections on this freedom — comparison with continental nations in this respect, &c.

XII. ON THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING.

Introduction. The condition of Europe from the 5th to the 15th century.

1. Compare this period with that of the condition of Europe from the 15th to the 19th century.

2. The taking of Constantinople by the Turks—when?—its consequences.
3. What Italian prince first encouraged learning?
4. Mention the names of some of the scholars of the 15th and 16th centuries.
5. What effect had this encouragement on the literature of Europe?
6. Which was the first celebrated age of English literature?
7. Which country was now first celebrated for her learning?
8. *Conclusion.* Enthusiasm for learning—examples—universities, colleges, academies, schools, &c.

PRACTICAL SUBJECTS.

I. ON MONEY.

Introduction. Ancient methods of carrying on trade—the great inconvenience of barter.

1. The word “pecuniary,” whence derived—the object of the invention of money.
2. Early coins of the Greeks, Lydians, Persians, &c.
3. Why the precious metals were chosen for coined money.
4. Bank Notes—Bills of Exchange—Exchequer Bills, &c.
5. How do these forms of money facilitate business?
6. What is meant by “investing” money?
7. The proper uses and the abuses of money.
8. *Conclusion.* Reflections—an immoderate desire for wealth—squandering of riches—a proper medium—good to be done with money, &c.

II. ON HANDWRITING.

Introduction. Many popular errors — one, that the character may be guessed at from the handwriting.

1. A good handwriting a desirable and useful accomplishment.
2. What is the most essential quality of a good hand?
3. Formerly, the fashion was to write a bad hand; now, fortunately, this fashion is exploded.
4. A great advantage to write legibly, and at the same time quickly.
5. Ladies' handwriting, a commercial hand, a scholar's hand, &c.
6. Handwriting may be remodelled at any time of life.
7. Nationally, the English and Germans write clear and bold hands; the French and Italians cramped and illegible.
8. *Conclusion.* Cases in which a good handwriting is required — letters — copying — drawing up reports — authors' manuscripts, &c.

III. ON READING ALOUD.

Introduction. Many things of daily occurrence are really arts, though not generally considered such.

1. Wherever we can lay down principles, and carry them into practice, there is an art.
2. Reading may be reduced to principles, and every one may improve by careful practice.
3. *Articulation.* What, and whence derived; a distinct utterance of every syllable.
4. *Pronunciation.* The right accent and tone to

every word (give examples of wrong pronunciation).

5. *Inflection.* The raising and falling of the voice on certain words in a sentence (to prevent monotony).
6. *Pauses.* Stopping in certain places to give effect to the meaning.
7. *Tone.* The voice adapted to the sense of every passage.
8. *Pitch* of the voice—depends on circumstances—high in a large room, lower in a smaller.
9. *Anticipation.* The power of reading before we utter, to prevent wrong emphasis or inflection.
10. *Conclusion.* All these rules to be supported by practice—a very rare, though very desirable, accomplishment—cases where reading is required.

IV. ON EXERCISE.

Introduction. Certain principles observable through the whole range of nature: these always worthy of imitation.

1. Exercise one of these principles; applicable to mind as well as to body.
2. Explain this analogy.
3. Excess, in either case, defeats the purpose, and therefore injurious.
4. Things not used grow rusty, and out of good condition.
5. In the physical world, nature always in exercise—wind, water, &c.
6. All the faculties should be exercised—none neglected.

7. Judgment and discretion applied in particular cases.
8. *Conclusion.* Exercise: periodical, equal; both body and mind thus kept in health.

V. ON COSTUME.

Introduction. The infinite variety of nature: art an imitator.

1. Much taste may be displayed in dress.
2. Greek and Roman costume.
3. Eastern modes of dress.
4. Modern costumes: Spanish, Highland Scotch, &c.
5. The picturesque and the graceful.
6. Costume regulated partly by climate, fashion, &c.
7. Colours should be well assorted — no glaring contrasts.
8. *Conclusion.* A certain attention to dress proper: it should not engross too much of our time.

VI. ON READING FOR IMPROVEMENT.

Introduction. System and method required in all our pursuits.

1. One very fertile source of knowledge — reading.
2. Conversation desultory, imperfect; a book arranged, systematic.
3. We can reflect on passages read in a book.
4. The mind should be concentrated on what we are reading.
5. Read regularly, but not too long at a time: vary your studies.

6. In studying a subject, begin with a simple treatise, never with a voluminous work.
7. Keep a note-book ; make references to striking passages, but do not make long extracts.
8. *Conclusion.* Consult others as to what books are to be read ; avoid everything coarse, sentimental, or controversial.

VII. ON COMMERCE.

Introduction. The many and various ways by which a nation's welfare is provided for : a strong religious feeling, a high tone of morality, a generally diffused education, &c.

1. Commerce among these blessings ; its effects.
2. An ancient practice. Who were the most commercial people among the ancients ?
3. In modern times : Venetians, Genoese, Portuguese, Dutch, English, and Americans.
4. Mention some of the commodities of the northern and of the southern nations.
5. What advantages are mutually derived from this intercourse ?
6. Mention the articles of commerce drawn from America, Australia, and India.
7. How does commerce tend to civilise mankind, and make the probabilities of war less frequent ?
8. Show the state of those countries that refuse to establish a commercial intercourse with other nations, — China, Japan, &c., — and draw a conclusion.

VIII. ON TRAVELLING.

Introduction. The superiority of the sight over the other senses. What we see makes a deeper impression than what we hear or read of.

1. Hence the utility of travelling.
2. But the profit depends on the spirit in which we travel.
3. Various purposes of travel: all may be combined with instruction.
4. The world greatly indebted to travellers. How?
5. Sir John Mandeville, Marco Polo, Captain Cook, Bruce, Franklin, Parry, &c.
6. Novelty the cause of the pleasure derived from travelling.
7. Much to be seen in England itself, as well as on the Continent.
8. Reading, conversation, observation, and travelling, the principal sources of knowledge.

IX. ON AGRICULTURE.

Introduction. Difference between natural and artificial occupations.

1. Agriculture the primitive occupation of our first parents.
2. Cultivation of corn, vegetables, fruits, flowers, &c.
3. Variety of soils, drainage, rotation of crops, &c.
4. The application of chemistry to agriculture.
5. Agriculture a universal practice in all civilised countries.
6. Reclaiming of tracts of land from the sea, &c.

7. Systems of farming ; improvement of the land, &c.
8. Precariousness of this occupation ; the profits of farming. Concluding remarks.

X. ON GOOD HUMOUR.

Introduction. The variety of dispositions: the grave, the gay, the serious, the witty, &c.

1. Difference between humour and temper ; Johnson's definition of good humour.
2. Is this state of mind natural or acquired ? and, if acquired, how ?
3. Arguments in favour of good humour. What are its effects on ourselves and others ?
4. Good humour no proof of silliness ; perfectly compatible with good sense.
5. Is it possible for the morose and gloomy to become good-humoured ?
6. By what means could this change be effected ?
7. The example shown by the good-humoured.
8. *Conclusion.* A quality so frequently required — attainable by all — the advantages of acquiring this habit, &c.

XI. ON MANNERS.

Introduction. First impressions are lasting : most people judge by external appearance.

1. Various forms of manner : stiff, formal, cold, polite, reserved, timid, gentle, self-possessed, &c.
2. True politeness founded on a benevolent feeling.
3. The manners should be a true index to the character ; otherwise hypocritical.

4. Without a proper foundation, polished manners are worthless.
5. Grace in action and words, as well as in feeling.
6. A mistaken notion that rough manners prove honesty of character.
7. Learning, or knowledge, does not, of necessity, give us good manners.
8. *Conclusion.* Good manners command esteem, affection, and bring many other advantages.

XII. ON GOVERNMENT.

Introduction. The wide acceptation of many words, and the necessity to understand all their meanings.

1. Government of self—family—patriarchal—political, &c.
2. The necessity for this principle; consequences if suddenly changed or abolished.
3. How to govern ourselves: vigilance, meditation, self-examination; a sense of our weakness, and dependence on a Supreme Being, &c.
4. Justice required in governing others; no undue preference or dislike, or . . . (?)
5. Various forms of political government: the welfare of a people mainly depends on the government; responsibility of the rulers.
6. The Monarchical and the Republican forms.
7. What arguments may be adduced in favour of, or against, each?
8. The English form of government—its advantages; would it equally well suit other nations?

9. *Conclusion.* General reflections: the infirmities of nature—evil inclinations must be curbed—security of life and property maintained, &c.

List of general Subjects for Composition.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. On the order of literature. | 19. On the physical philosophy of the middle ages. |
| 2. On the commercial spirit of the English. | 20. On variety. |
| 3. On architecture. | 21. On our duties towards animals. |
| 4. On the characteristics of great musical composers. | 22. On English poetry. |
| 5. On rules, laws, and principles. | 23. On liberty. |
| 6. On the drama. | 24. On slavery. |
| 7. On the history of the 16th century. | 25. On the British essayists. |
| 8. On rhetoric. | 26. On evidence; positive and circumstantial. |
| 9. On English history. | 27. On advice. |
| 10. On superstition. | 28. On satire. |
| 11. On vulgar errors. | 29. On the causes and consequences of war. |
| 12. On economy. | 30. On the Crusades. |
| 13. On ceremonies. | 31. On the passion of fear. |
| 14. On the influence of popular writers. | 32. On the feudal system. |
| 15. On colonization. | 33. On chivalry. |
| 16. On the education of the poor. | 34. On the communes of France. |
| 17. On the character of the ancient Greeks. | 35. On the Reformation. |
| 18. On independence of thought. | 36. On treaties of peace. |
| | 37. On the causes of war. |
| | 38. On patriotism. |
| | 39. On experience. |
| | 40. On the study of Natural History. |

ON DOUBLE SUBJECTS.

Another form of writing which may be proposed as a useful exercise for the reasoning power, is when a question is put in such a form as to admit of two answers. On many subjects there may be a variety of opinions, some directly opposed to others. People may, and very often do, admit the truth of a general

proposition, but differ as to particulars. Most people, now-a-days, agree in the opinion that education is desirable ; but there is a very wide difference of opinion as to how the process of education should be conducted. We would all arrive at the same goal, but would not travel thither by the same path. Again, of two prominent historical characters, our sympathies may lead us to prefer one to the other, though we admire both. Or, it might be a question whether the object of our penal law should be to reform the criminal, or to secure the lives and property of the community, &c. In all these and such cases there are two sides to the question, and it will be for the writer to collect all the arguments on one side, and then on the other, to weigh them against each other, and thus form his opinion. The following piece of writing will illustrate this form of composition.

SUBJECT.

4

Which was the greater character, Alexander the Great or Julius Cæsar?

Before we can answer this question, there is much to be considered : the different condition of the world at the periods in which these great men respectively lived, the circumstances under which they both rose to eminence, the peculiar advantages and disadvantages attached to their respective lives, &c., must all have their weight in assisting us to arrive at any definitive conclusion on this question.

Alexander was left, unexpectedly, heir to the Macedonian kingdom at an early age, surrounded by political and personal difficulties. But notwithstanding his youth and inexperience, these obstacles were at

once removed by the fertility of his genius and the firmness of his will ; and he was soon in a condition to undertake that expedition which had so long been the ardent desire of the Greek States — an expedition which was to carry war into the country of their ancient enemies — avenge the heroes of Thermopylæ, and the insults offered to the sacred city of Minerva. Victory followed his standard at a pace proportioned to the advance of his soldiers, and the Persian Empire soon lay prostrate at the feet of the youthful conqueror. Would that we could here close the brilliant scene, and draw a veil over the future career of the hero. But the truth must be spoken ; and historical justice demands that his vices and crimes should be placed on record.

In the madness of his pride, he now exacted from his subjects the adoration paid to a god ; and the rest of his life was but a tissue of vice and crime. In a fit of violent passion, he murdered his oldest and best friend ; and, probably seeking to drown his remorse in the pleasures of the table, he at length fell a victim to his excesses, in the twelfth year of his reign.

Alexander had many advantages ; he studied under Aristotle, one of the greatest philosophers of Greece ; he had an ardent love of literature, especially the poetry of Homer. He was of a most generous disposition, as evidenced by his behaviour to the wife and mother of Darius, and to his physician Philip. He possessed a large and comprehensive intellect, of which we may form a more distinct notion when we contemplate the gigantic projects he left unfinished.

On the other hand, Cæsar had to contend against many disadvantages. He won his way to distinction

by his abilities. He carved out his fortune with his sword. He was opposed to fierce and powerful barbarians, formidable both for their numbers and their ferocity; but he overcame all these difficulties, and added at least one province to the Roman Empire. During the civil wars, he displayed as much skill and sagacity as he had shown in his government of Gaul, and here also he was invariably successful. Nor was he wanting in those high personal qualities which are naturally looked for in a soldier. On several occasions he displayed an intrepid courage, and a cool resolution worthy of the highest admiration.

In comparing the characters of these two great men, we cannot fail to be struck with the many points in which they resemble each other. Ambition was the ruling passion of both; and if there is merit in conquering, both are entitled to the highest praise. But there is here a difference. Alexander attacked an effeminate people, disorganised and enfeebled by luxury. Of these he made an easy conquest. With Cæsar the case was different; he was always opposed to a brave and energetic enemy—sometimes to his own countrymen—yet he was always successful. He had that confidence in himself which is an invariable sign of genius; and his reproach to the nervous pilot, "*Cæsarem vehis!*" is the key to his uniform success.

But Cæsar was not only a great general, he has claims to our notice on other grounds. He was an accomplished man of science and letters. His "Commentaries" are still read with delight, and are considered a model of pure style. His oratory was copious and flowing, and his knowledge of astronomy led to

that improvement of the calendar which has continued to the present day.

Though far from perfect, Cæsar is not open to the charge of immorality which can be brought against Alexander. They were both generous ; but Cæsar had a greater command over his passions. The Roman general was singularly merciful and kind ; and his first care, after conquering his enemies, was to make them his friends by the gentleness and consideration with which he treated them. The deaths of these great men were strikingly different ; and however we may regret the fate of Cæsar, it was far more favourable to his future reputation than if he had "lived the lease of time," and died the death of ordinary men. But the circumstances of the Macedonian king's death seemed to expunge all his virtues ; they present us with the degrading picture of one who, having overcome all external opposition, failed to conquer his own passions, and left to future generations a lasting example of weakness and intemperance.

The following list of double subjects will furnish exercises in this form of writing :—

DOUBLE SUBJECTS.

1. Which is the better form of government, a monarchy or a republic ?
2. Which has the more powerful effect in forming national character, climate or habits ?
3. A comparison between the characters of Thomas à Becket and Cardinal Wolsey.
4. On the comparative merits of the English and German languages.

5. From which vice does society most suffer, luxury or avarice?
6. Which has been of the most service to mankind, printing or steam?
7. A comparison between the writings of Shakspeare and Milton.
8. On the comparative characters of the ancient Greeks and Romans.
9. Which faculty is of the greater importance to cultivate, the reason or the imagination?
10. A comparison between the characters of Charles V. and Philip II.
11. A comparison between the characters of Oliver Cromwell and Napoleon Bonaparte.
12. On the different effects produced by the study of art and of science.
13. A comparison between the characters of Isabella of Spain and Elizabeth of England.
14. Which is the more agreeable study, poetry or rhetoric?
15. On the comparative merits of Homer and Virgil.
16. On the poetry of Dryden and Pope.
17. On the difference between fancy and imagination.
18. Which is the more useful profession, the church or the law?
19. Which is of the greater importance as a study, art or science?
20. Which produces the more important effects, the encouragement of agriculture or of manufactures?

PART V.

ON STYLE.

ON STYLE.

IF, as is universally admitted, no two persons are exactly alike in outward appearance, it is unreasonable to expect that any two minds should be so similar as to be undistinguishable from each other. Hence it follows that expression of thought must vary with varieties of mind, and, therefore, that every writer must have his own manner of expression.

The word "style" is derived from the Latin *stylus*, an instrument used by the ancient Romans for the purpose of writing. By a figure of speech, the name at first given to the pen was transferred to the peculiar mode of the writer, and the word is now generally used in the latter sense. The natural style of a writer is always closely connected with his manner of thinking, and hence, no better criterion of his intellect can be found than his written expression. Now, as styles differ with the nature of different minds, we must expect to meet with a great variety. Some are stiff, formal, and harsh; others powerful, pleasing, neat, harmonious, &c. But, as every power is capable of

cultivation, it is quite possible to improve in this particular, so as to change a formal and pompous into an easy, flowing style ; and it is obvious that in effecting this change, not only the outward expression, but the mind itself, whence the expression flows, will be materially improved by the operation.

In cultivating style, we should never lose sight of the great aim and purpose of all writing,—to make ourselves understood. To this end everything must be sacrificed ; and the least reflection will convince us that whatever graces or beauties we may imagine our compositions to possess, they must be useless if the writing itself is unintelligible. Clearness of expression is, then, the grand point ; and when this clearness is once acquired, it will be time enough to think of embellishment. First must come the useful, then the ornamental,—first the sense, then the sound,—and therefore it is to this indispensable quality, PERSPICUITY, we must, before all things, endeavour to attain.

The first essential to the attainment of a clear style is, that we have a definite understanding of our own meaning before we attempt to express it in written words : the thought should be well defined in the head before it is put on paper. But thought is of so subtle a nature, and our conceptions are sometimes so indistinct, that it may be frequently no easy matter to follow this rule. It is therefore recommended that the learner, though properly anxious, be not over solicitous on this subject. To write down something is better than to wait too long for the clear understanding of the thought. When the expression is on the paper, it may then be corrected, or improved, and

thus brought into the form of the writer's original intention. With practice will come facility, and the practice, if careful and continual, is the very best discipline for the mind. For be it observed, that the effect of this practice is to give clearness to the thought, and thereby directly to strengthen and expand the intellect,—an advantage which every sensible person will surely admit to be well worth the trouble of gaining.

This being premised, we have now to consider the qualities necessary to perspicuity of style. These are 1. Purity; 2. Propriety; and 3. Precision.

PURITY.

Language, to be pure, must be free, 1st, from all foreign words; 2nd, from antiquated terms; 3rd, from new-coined words not in good use; 4th, from grammatical errors; and 5th, from foreign idioms.

FOREIGN WORDS.

1. An example of the ridiculous jargon caused by an affectation of foreign terms, may be seen in the following extract from one of Lady Morgan's contributions to the "New Monthly Magazine":—

"I was *chez moi*, inhaling the *odeur musquée* of my scented *boudoir*, when the Prince de Z. entered. He found me in my *demi-toilette*, *blasée sur tout*, and pensively engaged in solitary conjugation of the verb *s'ennuyer*; and though he had never been one of my *habitués*, or by any means *des nôtres*, I was not disinclined, at this moment of *délassement*, to glide with him into the *crocchio ristretto* of familiar chat."

This absurd affectation will only excite ridicule in those who understand these foreign terms, and disgust in those who do not.

There is a limit, however, in this as in all things. Many very good English words have been imported from France, some even of a comparatively recent date, which we should be hardly justified in rejecting ; such as *ennui*, *espionnage*, *surveillance*, *bonhomie*, *naïveté*, &c. The only grounds on which we admit such innovations are, that we have no English words to express exactly the ideas which these words convey. Indeed, such words succeed in holding a place in our language only when they are really necessary ; otherwise they maintain but an ephemeral existence, and quickly become obsolete.

OBSOLETE WORDS.

2. Another important point connected with this subject is the revival of antiquated words. However great may be the admiration we entertain for the times of classical antiquity, or of mediæval manners, &c., we must take care not to let this feeling affect our language. Obsolete words should not be again brought into use, for the simple reason that they are no longer wanted ; and though such words would, no doubt, be understood by scholars or antiquaries, they would convey no definite sense to the generality of readers. No one would now think of using the terms *kerms* and *gallow-glasses* for light and heavy-armed infantry, nor would any one employ *anon* for 'immediately,' or *dowle* for 'feather,' or *kybe* for 'chilblain,' &c.; for

though these words may have been in common use early in the 17th century, they have now become quite obsolete, and are totally unintelligible to the great majority of readers. The same may be said of 'cleped,' 'erst,' 'whilom,' 'peradventure,' &c.

There are other English words which seem to be in a state of transition; fading away, or gradually vanishing from the language; among them may be mentioned 'betwixt,' 'froward,' 'likewise,' 'hither,' 'genteel,' 'hearken,' &c. Of such it may be difficult to determine whether they should or should not be retained. Though it cannot be said that they are wholly out of fashion, they are seldom used by the best writers, and we should, at any rate, avoid a too frequent repetition of them.

NEW WORDS.

3. With regard to the adoption of new-coined words, those only must be received for which we have good authority, and even these not too rashly. A word that is found necessary, is fairly tried, and has stood the test of some years, may be cautiously received and adopted as forming part of the durable materials of the language. The application of steam-power to locomotion has given us some new words, such as 'terminus,' 'shunt,' 'point,' 'break,' 'stoker,' &c. From Germany we have lately adopted 'handbook,' 'Fatherland,' &c.; and the word 'antecedents,' in a plural form, has lately been applied to the previous life and actions of one whose character we desire to inquire into. But, with respect both to

obsolete and to new-coined words, Pope's advice seems the best that we can follow : —

“ In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold ;
Alike fantastic, if too new or old.
Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.”

GRAMMATICAL ERRORS.

4. Grammatical errors are common to almost all our early great authors ; indeed, it is not till the commencement of the 17th century, that we meet with any English writers of eminence that are invariably correct in their grammar. Hobbes, who began his career of authorship about 1628, is quoted by Hallam as our first uniformly careful and correct writer ; but even he is far from faultless in this particular. In fact, the principles of English grammar were scarcely settled before this time, and then, in many points of grammatical form, a great variety of practice prevailed. Now, however, the case is different ; the authority of our best writers is the grammatical law of the language ; though it is a law far from being invariably maintained, even by many authors of acknowledged merit. We propose to show in what particulars this law has been, and still is, frequently violated.

ERRORS IN PRONOUNS.

The construction of a sentence will frequently require the subjective, where writers use the objective form of the personal pronoun. In the following sentences, the pronoun is incorrectly used :—

Personal Pronouns.

"They contributed more than *us*." "He was much older than *her*." "A prophet mightier than *him*." "I may preach as lawfully as *them* that do." In all these cases there is an ellipsis of the verb; and, by supplying the verb after the pronoun, the fault will be obvious. "More than *us* (contributed?)." "Older than *her* (was?)," &c.

In the subjoined cases, the fault is the converse of the above, *i. e.*, the subjective is used for the objective form of the personal pronoun:—

"Let you and *I* endeavour," &c. "Between you and *I*." "All slept save *she*." "There's none but *thou*." "She is sold like *thou*," &c. We sometimes meet with *ye* (the subjective plural form) instead of *you*, as in the following: "The more shame for *ye*." "The gales that from *ye* blow." "Tyrants dread *ye*," &c. This is a frequent practice, but it is unquestionably against the rule of grammar.

The Relative Pronoun.

The same sort of error may be frequently found in the wrong use of the relative; as: "He *whom* ye pretend reigns in heaven." "*Whom* do men say that I *am*?" "*Who* should I meet the other day but," &c. "To lay the suspicion on somebody, I know not *who*."

In the first of these examples, it should be *who* (not *whom*), as the relative is here the subject to the verb 'reigns.' In the second, the relative depends on the verb 'am,' which governs the subjective and not the objective form. In the third, the construction requires *whom*, as the relative is here the object of the verb 'meet.'

In the fourth, the preposition 'on' is understood before the relative, and therefore the pronoun should be in the objective, not in the subjective, form.

Inconsistencies in the Use of Pronouns.

We should be uniform in the use of pronouns : the same individual must not be referred to in one sentence by both the singular and plural forms, nor must the person of the pronoun be changed. The possessive, also, must always correspond with the personal pronoun to which it refers. The following are violations of these rules : —

"Ungrateful boy! I cannot cease to love *thee*; for I am still *your* father." "The *wicked are* suffered to flourish till the sum of *his* iniquities is full." "*You* detest me, *thy* creature, to whom *thou* art bound by ties," &c. "In such a dilemma, *one* can hardly tell what plan *we* should adopt," &c. "Following our guides, *we* descend about fifty steps, and then *you* arrive at the entrance of the grand cavern." "*Who* ever *thinks* of learning the grammar of *their* own tongue?" "*Every* man according to *their* works." "*Each* of them paid *their* portion."

Another and the other.

Another signifies any other; *the other* signifies one of two. These two pronouns differ from each other; but they are frequently confounded. Of a number of things, when I have examined one, I may ask to see *another* (*i. e.* any other), but of a work in two volumes, when I have read one, I may desire to read *the other* volume (*i. e.*, the one I have not yet read). *Each other* is said of two things; *one another* of

more than two. In the following examples, these pronouns are used incorrectly : —

“The house was full from one end to *another*.”
 “Let them strike till you cannot tell one foot from *another*.” “Prose and poetry are different *one* from *another*.” “One end of the reed being as thick as *another*.”

ERRORS IN THE USE OF VERBS.

Numerous errors in the use of the verb are committed by our best authors, especially where the subject is a noun of multitude. When a noun of multitude is used in a general or a distributive sense, the verb must agree with it in the plural number ; as, “The *clergy are* opposed to this measure.” But if the sense be collective, then the verb should be of the singular number ; as, “The *number of* the children *was* fifteen.”

The following quotations exhibit violations of this rule : “The *number of* the names *were* about one hundred and twenty.” “The *population is* tall.” “There *are a variety of* things.” “I have considered *what have* been said.” “That *people rejects* the use of temples.”

Two nouns closely connected, or coexistent, must have a singular verb ; as, “*Bread and butter is* good.” “The *horse and chaise is* at the door.” “The *brandy and water was* ready.” “Early to bed, and early to rise, *makes a man* healthy, wealthy, and wise,” &c.

In the following examples, the verb does not agree with its subject : —

“There *was* more sophists than one.” “You *was*

acquainted." "You *was* here." "Whence *did thou* come up?" "Thou *confined*." "The temper as well as knowledge of a modern historian *require*," &c. "Magnus, with four thousand of his accomplices, *were* put to death." "Cleander, with six hundred soldiers, *were* executed," &c.

When several singular subjects are connected by a disjunctive conjunction, the verb must be singular, and not as in the following examples: "He knows not what spleen, languor, or listlessness *are*." "Neither death *nor* torture *were* sufficient," &c. "*Neither* Charles *nor* his brother *were* qualified to support such a system."

Each, *either*, *neither*, and *every*, when followed by 'of' with its governed words, must have the verb in the singular number, and not as in these examples: "*Each* of these words *imply*." "*Neither* of them *are* remarkable." "Every circumstance which *enable* them." "*Every one* of the letters *bear* date after his banishment." "In proportion as *either* of these two qualities *are* wanting," &c.

ERRORS IN THE USE OF THE SUBJUNCTIVE.

The subjunctive, not the indicative, mood should be used after a conjunction when there is question of future contingency or supposition. In the following quotations, this rule is neglected:—

"If the most active of mankind *was* able, at the close of his life," &c. "If a man *was* to compare the effect of a single stroke of the pickaxe with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed," &c. "If any member *absents* himself, he shall forfeit a

penny for the use of the club." "To bless the name of the Lord, whether He *gives* or takes away," &c.

The indicative, not the subjunctive, mood should be used after a conjunction when an ascertained fact is referred to as either past or present ; and a proposition enouncing a universal truth must always be in the present indicative. In the following sentences, these rules are infringed : —

"But if it be true, which was said by a French prince, that no man *was* a hero to the servants of his chamber, it is equally true that every man is less a hero to himself." "Two young men have made a discovery that there *was* a God." "If similitude of manners *be* a motive to kindness, the idler may flatter himself with universal patronage." "No one can thoroughly understand the Scriptures of the New Testament, unless *he be* well acquainted with those of the Old."

ERRORS IN THE SEQUENCE OF MOODS AND TENSES.

When two propositions are coupled by a conjunction, the verbs in each proposition must correspond with each other in mood and tense. This rule is infringed in the examples below : —

"If thou *bring* thy gift to the altar, and *rememberest*," &c. "Ye *will* not come to me that ye *might* have life." "Then *shalt* thou prosper, if thou *takest* heed to fulfil the statutes," &c. "Whether our conduct *be* inspected, and we *are* under a righteous government," &c. "Let us consider how many things we formerly knew, but now *have* either wholly *forgotten*, or but very imperfectly *remembered*," &c. "These contacts

would rather occasion silence than to produce a voice," &c.

A participle should not be joined with a verb, as in the following passage :—

"Nor is it then a welcome guest, *affording* only an uneasy sensation, and *brings* with it a mixture of concern and compassion."

An ellipsis of part of a compound tense should be avoided. The following sentences are exceptionable in this respect :—

"I *am*, and always *have, taken* great pains," &c.
 "You never *have*, and never will *see*, such a sight again." "This dedication may serve for almost any book that *has, is, or shall be* published." "I shall do all I can to persuade others to take the same measures for their cure which I *have*."

ERRORS IN THE USE OF PARTICIPLES.

The past tense indicative is frequently used incorrectly for the participle ; as :—

"I had no sooner *drank*, but," &c. "I do not find that any science has *throve* among us," &c. "Had he *wrote* English poetry," &c. "The seeds of future divisions were *sowed*." "The court of Augustus had not *wore* off the manners of the republic." "A constitution, when it has been *shook* by the iniquity," &c. "Some philosophers have *mistook*." "The greater regard was *showed*." "The fountains of the earth were *broke* open or *clove* asunder." "This nimble operator will have *stole* it." "If a new species of controversial books had not *arose*," &c.

ERRORS IN THE USE OF ADJECTIVES.

Some adjectives which bear in themselves a comparative or a superlative meaning, do not admit of degrees of comparison. In the following extracts, the form of the adjective is incorrect:—

“The last are, indeed, *more preferable*, because they are founded,” &c. “The two *chiefest* properties of air.” “The *extremest* parts of the earth were meditating a submission.” “Money, in a word, is the *most universal* incitement of human misery.”

Double comparatives and superlatives are no longer admissible; such as, “Which title had been *more truer*,” &c. “The waters are *more sooner* frozen than *more further* upwards,” &c. “I wish your grandam had a *worser* march.” “This was the *most unkindest* cut of all.”

When two objects are compared together, the comparative, not the superlative, degree of the adjective should be used. In the following sentences, this rule is infringed:—

“This was, in reality, the *easiest* manner of the two.” “The question is not whether a good Indian or bad (a bad) Englishman be *most* happy; but which state is *most* desirable, supposing virtue and reason to be the same in both.”

Adjectives are sometimes incorrectly used as adverbs; as:—

“I shall endeavour to live *suitable* to a man in my station.” “He behaved himself *conformable* to that blessed example.” “His expectations run high, and the fund to supply them is *extreme* scanty.” “I never could think so very *mean* of him.” “There is

scarce a man living," &c. "*Exceeding* fair." "*Exceeding* popular." "*Extreme* good bargains." "His speech was all *excellent* good in itself," &c.¹

INACCURACIES IN THE USE OF THE COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVE.

"This noble nation hath, *of all others*, admitted *fewer* corruptions" (than any other). "The vice of covetousness is what enters *deepest* into the soul of *any other*" (deeper than any other). "We have a profession set apart for the purposes of persuasion, wherein a talent of this kind would prove *the likeliest*, perhaps, *of any other*" (likelier than any other). "As *old*, or even *older* than tradition" (as old as). "The event, *of all others*, which the Orleans party *most ardently* wished to avoid" (more ardently than any other).

ERRORS IN THE USE OF NEGATIVE AND DISJUNCTIVE PARTICLES.

'Neither' should be followed by 'nor,' and not as in the following extracts:—

"That *neither* partiality *or* prejudice appear." "These can point out the straight way upon the road, but can *neither* tell you the next turning, *or* answer your questions." "He was charged as *neither* faithful *or* exact." "I demand *neither* place, pension, exclusive privilege, *or* any other reward whatever."

¹ Some adjectives are correctly used as adverbs; as: "The door was *fast* locked;" "Do not speak too *loud*;" "I *long* loved your daughter," &c.

"*Neither* by them *or* me would it be regarded as an objection."

In English, two negatives make an affirmative; and, therefore, if we wish to deny, only one negative should be used. In the following examples, this principle is transgressed :—

"We need not, *nor do not*, confine the purposes of God" (nor do we). "In the growth and stature of souls, as well as bodies, the common productions are of different sizes, that occasion no gazing, *nor no* wonder" (nor any). "I'll prove that you are no composer, *nor know no* more of music than you do of algebra" (and know). "*Nor* is danger ever apprehended in such a government from the violence of the sovereign, *no* more than we commonly apprehend danger from thunder or earthquakes" (take out *no*).

FOREIGN IDIOMS.

5. An idiom is an expression peculiar to some one language, and which, if translated literally into any other, will be pronounced incorrect. Thus, if any one were to translate into English the German expression, "Wo sind Sie gewesen?" by "Where are they been?" or the French, "Je viens de voir mon père," by "I come from to see my father," every one would condemn these forms as bad English. Both these sentences have corresponding equivalents in English; but they are not translatable word for word, and therefore they are idioms.

The style of a writer, as regards idiom, is very likely to be affected by the direction of his studies.

Many, not unnaturally, imbibe so strong a love for classical scholarship, or for the modern European languages, that they sometimes unconsciously introduce into their English compositions forms of expression which properly belong to Greek, Latin, French, or German. From this cause, some of our most learned authors are among the least idiomatic of English writers. In all cases this is a great error, because it is un-English, and distorts the proper character of our language; but it is not unfrequently an absurd affectation, a mere ostentatious display of learning. The following are a few of the many errors of this kind that are profusely scattered over the English writings of the last and the present century:—

“The king soon found reason to *repent him* of his provoking such dangerous enemies.” “The popular lords did not fail to *enlarge themselves* on the subject.” “Removing the term from Westminster, *sitting the parliament*, was illegal.” “Solomon was of this mind; and I make no doubt but he made as wise and true proverbs as anybody has done since, — *Him* only excepted, who was a much greater and wiser man than Solomon.” “Lewis the Fourteenth *had reason* when he said, ‘The Pyrenees are removed.’”

This affectation of adopting French idioms is cleverly ridiculed in Hannah More’s “Satirical Letter from a Lady to her Friend, in the Reign of George the Fifth” :—

“Alamode Castle.

“Dear Madam,

“I no sooner *found myself* here, than I visited my new apartments, which are composed of five *pieces*. The small room, which *gives upon* the

garden, is *practised* through the great one, and there is no other issue. As I was *exceeded with fatigue*, I no sooner *made my toilette*, than I let myself fall upon a bed of repose, where sleep *came to surprise me*. My lord and I are *in the intention* to make good cheer, and a great expense, and this country is in possession to furnish wherewithal to amuse oneself. All that England *has of* illustrious, all that youth *has of* amiable, or beauty *of* ravishing, *sees itself* in this quarter. *Render yourself* here, then, my friend, and you shall find assembled *all that is best*, whether for letters, whether for mirth," &c., &c.

Many mistakes in idiom are made by the application of wrong prepositions.

"The only actions *to* which we have always seen, and still see, all of them *intent*, are such as tend to the destruction of one another." "To which, as Bishop Burnet tells us, the Prince of Orange was willing to comply." "He had been perplexed *with* a long compliance *to* foreign manners." "Your character, which I, or any other writer, may now value ourselves (?) *by* drawing, will probably be dropped," &c. "The discovery he made and communicated *with* his friends." "Not from any personal hatred *to* them, but in justification *to* the best of queens." "The wisest princes need not think it any diminution *to* their greatness, or derogation *to* their sufficiency, to rely upon counsel." "A supercilious attention *to* minute personalities is a certain indication *to* the want of innate dignity." "He found the greatest difficulty *of* writing." "The esteem which Philip had conceived *of* the ambassador." "The greatest difficulty was

found *of* fixing just sentiments." "The Christians were driven out of all their possessions, in acquiring *of* which, incredible numbers of men had perished." "You know the esteem I have *of* his philosophy." "He is so resolved *of* going to the Persian court." "Neither he nor the other shall make me swerve *out of* the path which I have traced *to* myself." "I do likewise dissent *with* the 'Examiner.'" "Dr. Johnson, *with* whom I am sorry to differ in opinion, has treated it as a work of merit." "Ovid, whom ye accuse *for* luxuriancy of verse." "This effect, we may safely say, no one beforehand could have promised *upon*." "A greater quantity may be taken from the heap, without making any sensible alteration *upon* it." "Every office of command should be entrusted to persons *on* whom the parliament shall confide." "All of which required abundance of finesse and delicatesse to manage with advantage, as well as a strict observance *after* times and fashions." "The Italian universities were forced to send for their professors *from* Spain and France." "Napoleon sought to ally himself in marriage with the royal families in Europe, to engraft himself *to* an old imperial tree." "Such were the difficulties *with* which the question was involved." "The accounts they gave of the favourable reception of their writings *with* the public." "Of various natural and acquired excellence, it is hard to say whether the British or French soldiers were the most (?) admirable."

PROPRIETY.

That our composition is free from foreign and obsolete words, and correct in its grammatical forms, is so much gained ; but there are yet other points to be considered. Our grammar may be unexceptionable, and the words we employ all English, and yet we may be in error as to their application ; that is, we may use them in a sense which custom has not assigned to them. It is clear that the wrong application of words must produce obscurity of expression ; and the following remarks are therefore made to assist the learner to avoid impropriety in the use of single words.

IMPROPRIETY IN WORDS.

1. A close resemblance in *sound* between two words will sometimes cause us to use one for the other. Two English words are frequently derived from the same root, and yet differ in signification. Such are : ‘observance’ and ‘observation ;’ ‘endurance’ and ‘duration ;’ ‘ingenious’ and ‘ingenuous ;’ ‘product’ and ‘produce ;’ ‘import’ and ‘importance ;’ ‘conscience’ and ‘consciousness ;’ ‘lay’ and ‘lie ;’ ‘timid’ and ‘timorous ;’ ‘transient’ and ‘transitory,’ &c.

Some writers have used the verb ‘to demean oneself’ in the sense of ‘to behave meanly ;’ whereas this verb, though now but seldom used, signifies no more than to behave generally.

‘E’er,’ a contraction for ‘ever,’ is sometimes mistaken for the conjunction ‘ere’ (before) ; ‘genii’ is used for ‘geniuses,’ &c.

2. Mistakes in the use of words also arise from a

close resemblance in *sense*. The principles of difference are here very various; in some cases, one word has an active and the other a passive meaning, as in the following:—‘veracity’ and ‘truth;’ ‘force’ and ‘strength;’ ‘forgetfulness’ and ‘oblivion;’ ‘hatred’ and ‘odium;’ ‘ability’ and ‘capacity;’ ‘trust’ and ‘credit;’ ‘consent’ and ‘assent,’ &c.

In another class it will be found that the one word differs from the other in intensity of meaning, as in ‘compunction’ and ‘remorse;’ ‘diligence’ and ‘industry;’ ‘intention’ and ‘purpose;’ ‘moment’ and ‘instant;’ ‘pertinacity’ and ‘obstinacy;’ ‘plenty’ and ‘abundance;’ ‘temperance’ and ‘abstinence,’ &c.

Again, words may differ from each other as being the one positive and the other negative in meaning; one expressing the presence, and the other the absence of a quality; as in ‘desperate’ and ‘hopeless;’ ‘disbelief’ and ‘unbelief;’ ‘injury’ and ‘disadvantage;’ ‘suspicion’ and ‘distrust,’ &c.

Lastly, a fertile source of difference of meaning may be found in the principle by which one word has a generic, and the other a specific signification. This difference will be found between such words as ‘leave’ and ‘quit;’ ‘bonds’ and ‘fetters;’ ‘list’ and ‘catalogue;’ ‘praise’ and ‘applause;’ ‘way’ and ‘road,’ &c.¹

A knowledge of these and many other differences in the signification of words will be of incalculable advantage to the learner. It will not only prevent

¹ For more detailed information on this part of the study of English composition, the reader is referred to the Author’s “English Synonymes Classified and Explained.” Longman and Co.

inaccuracy of expression, but will materially increase his power of writing; especially in narrative and description, where a graphic delineation is more particularly required.

A very common error in writing is to use English words in a foreign sense. Some employ the word 'assist' in the French sense of 'to be present.' To assist at a ceremony means in English to take part in it; whereas, in French, it signifies to be present on the occasion.

To 'arrive' is another word that has been used incorrectly. A writer says: "I am a man, and cannot help feeling any sorrow that can *arrive* at man." (It should be 'happen to man.')

'To progress' in the sense of 'to advance' is an Americanism we should do well to avoid.

Sir Archibald Alison, in his "History of Europe," uses the strange word 'implemented;' thus: "All the stipulations of the treaty were *implemented* by the Austrians with true German faith." Whatever may have been the author's meaning, there is no authority for this word.

'Party' is a word frequently misused, and is vulgarly employed for 'person.' One person may be a party to a contract, because he takes part in an agreement which, of necessity, comprises more than one; but as applied to a single person in any other sense, the word is inadmissible. Some use the verb 'to obtain' incorrectly in the sense of 'to prevail,' as, "This fashion could not long *obtain*." Obtain what? The verb 'to obtain' is transitive, and should be followed by its object.

The adjective 'mutual' is frequently used improperly. When two persons speak of a third, they should not call him their *mutual*, but their *common*, friend. A and B may be mutual friends, and C may be a common friend to A and B.

The word 'avocation' is often improperly used for vocation. The main business of a man's life may, by a figure, be termed his vocation, or calling; but 'avocation' properly means whatever may call him *away* from his usual occupation, and should never be used in the other sense.

But of all cases of the abuse of words, the false application of the verb 'to ventilate' is the most flagrant. The word, in its original and proper sense, means to cause the air to circulate; but now some writers speak of ventilating a subject. "The question has been well ventilated," says a modern writer, using the word in the sense of to discuss at length, or to expatiate on a subject. This is an absurd and useless innovation, and one which no one who has any pretensions to good taste should think of adopting.

American writers generally use the word 'over' incorrectly, as in the following sentence: "There was but one pair of horses in *over* a hundred that were tolerably good." (It should be 'in *more* than a hundred,' &c.)

IMPROPRIETY IN PHRASES.

The next point for consideration is impropriety in phrases, as distinguished from single words. An incorrect expression of this sort will frequently arise from inconsistency. The phrase 'of all others,' used

after the superlative, is open to objection. For example: "It celebrates the Church of England as the most perfect *of all others*." Since the writer here means to distinguish the Church of England *from* all others, how can he properly speak of it as the most perfect *of* all others? It should be 'as more perfect *than* any other,' or, 'as the most perfect of all Churches.'

The expression 'among others,' as commonly applied, does not seem very philosophical. It has been said, "*Among other things*, he spoke of his adventures in India." Now surely we should here say, *as well as*, or *besides* other things, and not *among* them; for the phrase does not mean that he spoke of these adventures as *mixed up with*, or together with other things, but apart from them.

Faults of this sort are often made through inattention; as, "I do not reckon that we want a genius more than *the rest* of our neighbours." This sentence was written by Dean Swift, and the following, open to a similar objection, are also from his pen:—"I had like to have gotten *one or two* broken heads for my impertinence." "The first project was to shorten discourse by *cutting polysyllables into one*." "I solemnly declare that I have not wilfully committed the least *mistake*." The terms in the last sentence are incompatible; for a *mistake* never can be *wilful*. When Addison wrote—

"So the *pure limpid* stream, when *foul with stains*
Of rushing torrents," &c.,

he fell into the same sort of inaccuracy. A stream cannot be pure and limpid *when* it is foul with stains.

It is not uncommon to meet with the expression 'the greater majority' incorrectly applied; as, "The greater majority voted for the former member." A member might be returned to Parliament by a greater majority on one occasion than on another; but in any one election there could not be two majorities to compare together; and consequently the expression, thus applied, is incorrect. (It should be 'a large majority'.)

Another inconsistency is found in the expression so frequently met with, '*different to*.' These two words, when used together, imply a contradiction. 'Different' means 'bearing asunder;' that is, going two ways, apart from each other; whereas 'to' denotes approximation, or the coming together of things. We differ *from* others when we do *not* agree with them in opinion. Things are sometimes different *from*, and not *to*, each other.

It is satisfactory to observe that our best writers are now beginning to reject the preposition '*to*' after the words 'averse' and 'aversion.' '*To*' is here open to the same objection as in the last-mentioned case. The word 'averse' means 'turning from,' and we should say, properly, averse *from*, and not *to*, anything we may dislike.

We occasionally meet with a verb followed by a preposition, where no preposition is required; as, "He investigated *into* the matter." This is incorrect; a magistrate may inquire *into* or *about* a case, but he investigates the case itself.

Irving, in his "Life of Washington," speaks of him as being "*taken down* with a fever." This is not English.

Some American writers use the preposition 'of,' instead of 'at,' after the verb 'to smell;' thus, "He smelt *of* hartshorn," instead of "He smelt," or "inhaled hartshorn."

Sir Archibald Alison says, "They were not long *of* doing," &c. (This is a Scotticism; the *of* is redundant.)

The prepositions 'except' and 'without' should never be followed by a proposition. It is not uncommon to meet with such phrases as, "Except a different arrangement be made," or, "Without something should happen to prevent it." These are incorrect forms, and their use should be carefully avoided. For these prepositions the writer should substitute the conjunction 'unless.'

COMMON-PLACE EXPRESSIONS.

An offence against propriety of style frequently appears in the form of common-place expressions, or vulgarisms. Such phrases or words as are either not expressive of the ideas the writer intends to convey, or do not convey them fully, are also open to criticism on the same grounds. In the following sentences we find examples of this fault:—"These circumstances might *choke* the faith of a philosopher." "The kings of Syria and Egypt *worried* each other." "Every year, a new flower *beats* all the old ones." "A passage in a Greek or Latin author which is not *blown upon*." "After having surveyed this mass of mortality, as it were, *in the lump*." "He therefore *made* (composed?) tragedies." "The critics have *made* (written?) dissertations." "A few reflections will

help us to *make* (form?) a true judgment." "They hoisted the poor bewildered wretch *on to* a horse," &c.

OBSCURITY FROM ELLIPSIS.

Obscurity may arise from many other causes besides those already mentioned; and, firstly, from some defect in the expression. Ellipsis, or the omission of certain words, occurs in all languages. This occasionally gives rise to obscurity, and in all such cases the ellipsis is not allowable. For example: "To do *that* is righteous in thy sight." "We speak *that* we do know." This form of expression is now obsolete; we must say, "To do *that which* is righteous," &c. "We speak *that which* we know," or "*what* we know," &c.

One form of ellipsis, of very frequent occurrence with young people, ought to be most studiously avoided, viz., the ellipsis of the infinitive mood, as in the following example: "Have you written your exercise? No; but I am going *to*." (!!) In such cases the whole form of the infinitive should be always expressed.

Secondly, either an affectation of conciseness, or the rapidity of thought natural to some writers, will occasionally produce more serious defects of expression. For example, "I have a deep sense of your kind action." 'Sense' here means an inward feeling; and we cannot *feel* an action. It should be, "I have a deep sense of the kindness of your action." Again: "You ought to condemn all the wit in the world against you." It should be, 'all the wit in the world *that is directed* against you.' "A savage is a happier state of life than a slave at the oar." Things are here brought together which are incongruous. We may compare a savage

with a slave ; but neither the one nor the other can be compared with a state of life. The sentence may be thus corrected : "The state of life of a savage is far happier than that of a slave at the oar." "This courage among the adversaries of the court was inspired into them by various incidents, for every one of which, I think, the ministers, or, if that was the case, the minister alone, is to answer." If what was the case ? There is nothing here to which we can refer the pronoun '*that*;' and we are left to guess that the writer meant '*if there was but one minister.*'

OBSCURITY FROM WRONG ARRANGEMENT.

A wrong arrangement is another source of obscurity. Here we imagine, on a first perusal, that the sentence has one meaning ; and we find, on a second, that it has another. For example : "It contained a warrant for conducting me and my retinue to Traldragdubb, or Trildrogdrib, for it is pronounced both ways, as near as I can remember, *by a party of ten horse.*" The words in italics should come immediately after the noun 'retinue.' "I had several patients died in that hospital of fever." Here it should be observed that the pronoun 'who' must be placed before the verb, and that 'of fever' must immediately follow the verb 'died;' thus : "I had several patients who died of fever in that hospital." "I perceived that it had been scoured with half an eye." Here, firstly, 'with half an eye' is a vulgarism ; secondly, could anything be scoured with half an eye ? or, did he perceive it with half an eye ? "I have hopes that when Will confronts him, and all the ladies

on whose behalf he engages him cast kind looks and wishes at their champion, he will have some chance." Here, '*all the ladies*,' &c., seems at first to be governed by the verb 'confronts,' but we afterwards find that this expression is the subject of the verb 'cast.' Insert the adverb 'when' before '*all the ladies*,' and the ambiguity vanishes. The following sentence is open to a similar exception: "He advanced against the fierce ancient, imitating his address, his pace, and career, *as well as the vigour of his horse* and his own skill would allow." This obscurity may be cleared up by substituting 'as far as' for 'as well as,' &c. "Diocletian passed the *nine last years* of his life in a private condition." (It should be, 'the last nine years;' there could not have been more than one last year.) "Of the twelve Cæsars, *three alone* died natural deaths." (It should be, 'only three.')

OBSCURITY FROM USING THE SAME WORD TOO FREQUENTLY, OR IN DIFFERENT SENSES.

In the same sentence, we should not repeat a word too frequently, as in the following: "It is of *great* consequence that we pay the *greatest* attention to such matters; for they contribute to our welfare in a much *greater* measure than we generally imagine." In this sentence we have the three degrees of the adjective, great, greater, greatest. The writer might have said, "It is of the *utmost* importance that we pay the *strictest* attention," &c.

This repetition occurs most frequently with pronouns, where it is a fertile source of obscurity; for

example: "He promised his friend to send him his book." Whose book?—his own, or his friend's? Again: "One may have an air *which* proceeds from a just sufficiency and knowledge of the matter before him, *which* may naturally produce some motions of his head and body *which* might become the bench better than the bar."

A word should never be repeated in the same sentence in different meanings; as, "Gregory *favoured* the undertaking for no other reason than this, that the manager *favoured* his friend." (Say, *resembled* his friend.) "They *held* the doctrine that it is not wrong to *hold* possession of ill-gotten goods, but that the fault lies in allowing ourselves to be detected." (Say, *retain* possession, &c.) "Any reasons of doubt *which* he might have in this case, would have been reasons of doubt in the case of other men, who may give *more*, but cannot give *more* evident signs of thought to their fellow-creatures." Here, 'more' is first an adjective, and then the sign of the comparative. The sentence should stand, 'who may give more numerous, but cannot give more evident, signs,' &c.

"The sharks *who* prey upon the inadvertency of young heirs, are more pardonable than *those who* trespass upon the good fortune of *those who* treat them upon the footing of choice and respect." (The repetition of *who* in these three different senses is the source of much confusion and obscurity.)

The pronoun 'they,' when repeated, often causes much ambiguity; as, "They were persons of such moderate intellects, even before *they* were impaired by passion." A similar obscurity is produced by the frequent repetition of the pronoun 'it.'

OBSCURITY FROM UNCERTAIN REFERENCE.

Another cause of obscurity lies in the use of pronouns when it does not at first appear to what they refer ; for example :—

“The laws of nature are truly what my Lord Bacon styles his aphorisms,—laws of laws. Civil laws are always imperfect, and often false deductions from *them*, or applications of *them*; nay, they stand, in many instances, in direct opposition to *them*.” Probably every one would not see, on a first reading, that the pronoun *them* here always refers to the laws of nature, and *they* to civil laws.

“I like so much to see the corn-fields ; *it* was cut when we were there, so we saw *it* carried away.”

“On Wednesday, the rat ventured into the kitchen, and Mr. B., having loaded a pistol, drove *it* into the garden.”

“It has happened the *third* time in *as many* months.”

“Cicero returned to Rome, about the middle of November, to assist at *Milo's wedding*, *who* married Fausta, a rich and noble lady, the daughter of Sylla the dictator.”

OBSCURITY ARISING FROM TOO ARTIFICIAL A STRUCTURE OF SENTENCES.

The structure of sentences, of which more is said in another part of this work, is a subject for the student's careful consideration. Long sentences should be, in general, avoided ; and when employed, care should be taken that their members be similarly constructed, so that, if taken to pieces, each member

might constitute a distinct sentence. Some writers on composition are of opinion that parentheses should be altogether discarded, on the grounds that a parenthesis is only an awkward way of inserting a circumstance that would be much better expressed in a separate sentence. This, however, is too severe a rule. Parentheses, when short, are perfectly admissible; but they should neither be very long, nor occur too frequently. The following passage from Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection," will strikingly illustrate the above remarks:—

"How any one who calmly considers what a new birth of the soul implies — a new birth solemnly announced, by the Lord of Heaven and Earth, to man as a thing in which all men are concerned, which a teacher in the chosen nation ought already to have known, which translates the subject of it into the kingdom of heaven—can proceed to explain it, according to the ordinary High Church doctrine, into something so impotent and shadowy, that if it were to vanish from the precincts of religious belief, no serious practical Christian, as I fully believe, would feel that he had sustained any loss, or that anything had gone from him, is to me inconceivable."

If only the words in italics had been retained, this period would have been sufficiently clear and comprehensible; but, as it stands, the sentence is so overloaded with circumstances and parentheses, that it is next to impossible for the reader to see the connection of its principal members.

The construction of the following period, extracted from Dean Trench's very interesting little work on proverbs, is open to a similar objection:—

"In this aspect, as having been used at a great critical moment, and as part of the moral influence brought to bear on that occasion for effecting a great result, no proverb of man's can be compared with that one which the Lord used, when He met his future apostle, but at this time his persecutor, in the way, and warned him of the fruitlessness and folly of a longer resistance to a might which must overcome him, and with still greater harm to himself at the last."

Here there are materials for at least two, if not three, sentences.

OBSCURITY FROM THE USE OF TECHNICAL TERMS.

Strictly speaking, technical terms are not considered as belonging to the language, because they are not in common use, and are, consequently, unintelligible to the general reader. They form, indeed, a distinct dialect, and are understood only by a comparatively small class. In a treatise on some particular art or science, addressed to its students or professors, technical terms are, of course, indispensable. They may be also occasionally introduced in delineation of character.

A sailor would term the hinder part of everything 'the stern.' Instead of saying he was unfortunate, he would call it 'being on his beam ends,' or 'cast on a lee shore.' With him, also, meeting an acquaintance would be 'sighting' his friend. In the language of the stable, the right and the left-hand sides of the road are called the 'off' and the 'near' sides. A certain mode of joining boards is termed by carpenters 'dovetailing.' Military men would style their lodgings, comfortable 'quarters,' as a sailor would

say 'a good berth.' Merchants use the word 'advices' in the sense of 'news' or 'intelligence.' They talk of 'advices' from Hamborough, and they speak of a letter as a 'favour,' &c. All these, and many other terms, are familiarly known in certain professions and trades, and though many of such words are probably understood by a large class of readers, they are not used in the current language of polite society, nor should they be introduced in writing on general subjects.

OBSCURITY ARISING FROM DOUBLE MEANING.

Equivocal expressions naturally create a doubt concerning their meaning; and they should be, therefore, always avoided. These may be found in the use of almost every part of speech. To begin with prepositions. The preposition *of* sometimes has an active, and sometimes a passive, signification. For example: "The love *of* his family," &c. Does this mean the love he bore his family, or the love his family bore him? If the former, we had better say, "His love for his family;" if the latter, "The love of his family towards him." Again, "The Reformation of Luther," may mean the reformation effected by, or on, Luther, &c.

The conjunction 'or' is sometimes used equivocally; as, "The Greeks worshipped Zeus, or Jupiter." To those who do not know that Zeus and Jupiter are the names of one and the same heathen divinity, it might here seem that the Greeks worshipped either the one or the other.

Again, in pronouns: "She united the great body of the people in *her* and their interest." *Her* may be a personal or a possessive pronoun; and it may not

be at once clear to every reader for which of the two it is here intended.

In adjectives:—A ‘fearful’ man may signify one who inspires fear in others, or one who is himself affected by that passion. In the following sentence, the word ‘mortal’ leaves the sense ambiguous: “As for such animals as are ‘*mortal*,’ or noxious, we have a right to destroy them.” ‘Mortal’ means either subject to death, as ‘a mortal creature,’ or causing death, as ‘a mortal wound,’ and in the above sentence the wrong sense of the word seems more readily suggested.

In verbs: as, “He spoke of nothing more than what his predecessor *did*.” (It should be, ‘had mentioned.’) “I have long since learned to like nothing but what *you do*” (you like).

The word ‘only’ is a fertile source of ambiguity. This word may be used either as an adjective, or as an adverb, and the meaning of a sentence in which it is found will mainly depend on its place; thus: “Not only Jesuits can equivocate.” Now this may mean that Jesuits are not the only persons who can equivocate; or, that to equivocate is not the only thing that Jesuits can do. If the former meaning be intended, the sentence should run thus: “Not Jesuits only can equivocate” (*i. e.* others as well as they can equivocate). If the latter, “Jesuits can not only equivocate” (*i. e.*, they can do other things).

A similar difficulty arises from confounding the pronoun ‘few’ with ‘a few.’ “Few people will assent to the truth of this proposition,” means that not many will allow it to be true; whereas, “A few people will assent,” &c., means that a small number will

assent, &c. In the same way, "He gave him little encouragement," differs from "He gave him a little encouragement."

Various other English phrases have a double meaning, and great care should be taken in using them. Such are, 'not the least;' 'not the smallest;' 'nothing less than,' &c.

THE UNINTELLIGIBLE.

The unintelligible in writing arises from the author's confusion of ideas; and here, if we can make out his meaning, it will be the result of the reader's sagacity, rather than the writer's clearness. Take the following sentence: "I have often observed that the superiority among these (coffee-house politicians) proceeds from an opinion of gallantry and fashion." Whose opinion is here meant? and secondly, what opinion? There is here no definite meaning, and we are left to supply the author's intention by conjecture. Here is another in which the logic is grievously at fault: "But if happiness is the satisfaction of all our faculties, the life of Paradise must have exercised them all. The senses were gratified; for God made every tree to grow that was pleasant to the eye." This evidently implies that the gratification of the senses consists in the gratification of the eye alone; and moreover, that pleasure through the sense of sight is produced only by *trees*. The following sentence occurs in a recent work: "Want of mechanical power was the great desideratum." A desideratum means something we do not possess, but which we desire to possess. The writer probably meant that mechanical power was the great desideratum — surely not the want of it!

Writers are sometimes unintelligible from affectation of excellence. What meaning can be discovered in the following sentences?—"This temper of soul *keeps our understanding tight about us.*" "A man is not qualified for a butt who has not a good deal of wit and vivacity *in the ridiculous side of his character.*" "I seldom see a noble building, or any great piece of magnificence or pomp, but I think how little is all this *to fill the idea* of an immortal soul." But the following is the climax of absurdity: "If the savour of things lies cross to honesty, if the fancy be florid, and the appetite high towards the subaltern beauties and lower order of worldly symmetries and proportions, the conduct will infallibly turn this latter way." Another: "Men must acquire a very peculiar and strong habit of turning their eye inwards, in order to explore the interior regions and recesses of the mind, the hollow caverns of deep thought, the private seats of fancy, and the wastes and wildernesses, as well as the more fruitful and cultivated tracts of this obscure climate."

PRECISION

There are two styles of writing directly opposed to each other—the concise and the diffusive. The concise writer condenses his thoughts so as to express them in the fewest possible words. He retrenches all superfluity of expression, acting on the principle that whatever does not assist, interferes with the meaning. The same thought is never repeated. The most effective and most exact terms are selected, and his

whole composition is rather suggestive than fully expressive of his meaning. Embellishment is quite compatible with precision of style ; but ornament, in this case, is used rather to illustrate, and add force to the thought, than to impart pleasure to the reader. With such a writer, language is viewed merely as an instrument of utility, not of luxury. The diffusive writer, on the other hand, adopts a directly contrary style. His thoughts are placed in a variety of lights. He is not anxious to express them in one sentence, but he repeats them in different terms ; and though his language is not forcible or impressive, it may be not deficient in perspicuity. True, it takes the reader a longer time to understand it ; but he reaches the same end, though by a more circuitous route. Such writers are fond of accumulating terms, and building up long periods, and they have a tendency to excess of ornament.

It cannot be said that either of these styles is positively good or bad ; but they are, both of them, open to serious objection, when carried to excess. An elaborate brevity is the sure way to obscurity of expression ; and we are told by Quintilian that our writings should be not only clear, but that it should be impossible to mistake their meaning,—a quality which no composition could possess in which there were not sufficient words to convey the sense fairly to the reader. On the other hand, an over-diffusive style is tiresome and fatiguing. It is discouraging to be obliged to wade through a multitude of unnecessary words containing but a small amount of sense ; and such a style can never command much interest or attention. However, most writers may be placed in one or the

other of these classes; and in either of the styles there may be much merit in the composition.

But the style, whether concise or diffusive, should vary with the occasion. In general, we need not be so concise in speaking as in writing; and in writing itself, some subjects require much more conciseness than others, and *vice versâ*. In narrative or description, conciseness of style is a great merit. It commands attention, interests the imagination, and is pleasing to the mind, by giving enough, and yet not too much, exercise to the faculties. In subjects where the understanding alone is addressed, a more diffusive, expository style is, perhaps, preferable. The understanding does not, in general, seize ideas so rapidly as the imagination; and therefore, in all matters of reasoning and instruction, a less concise style is recommended.

Of these two qualities of style, conciseness is far the more important to attain; for though brevity may not be equally adapted to every subject, we should in all cases avoid redundancy of expression. We shall therefore point out to the student certain practices he should avoid when endeavouring to give vigour and closeness to his writing.

1. *Tautology*. This is a repetition of the sense, either in the same or in other terms. The following passage furnishes an example of this fault:—

“The dawn is overcast—the morning lours,—
And heavily in clouds brings on the day.”

Here we have the same sense in three distinct forms.

“I look upon it as my *duty*, so far as God hath

enabled me, and as long as I keep within the bounds of truth, *duty*, and decency." It could not, surely, be any man's duty to transgress the bounds of duty. "I must be *forced* to get home; partly by stealth, and partly by *force*." To be *forced by force* is an unwarrantable redundancy of expression. "How many are there by whom these *tidings* of good *news* were never heard?" (that is, *news of news*). "Never did Atticus succeed better in gaining the *universal* love and esteem of *all* men." Here the word 'all' is superfluous, as the idea is already expressed in 'universal.'

"The *writings* of Buchanan, and especially his 'Scottish History,' are *written* with strength, perspicuity, and neatness."

"Some writers have confined their attention to *trifling minutiae* of style."

"The complication of the old laws of France had given rise to a *chaos of confusion*."

"The history, of necessity, became *in a great degree, for the most part*, a parliamentary one."

"It was founded mainly on the *entire* monopoly of the *whole* trade with the colonies."

"It unfortunately happened that our reporter was engaged elsewhere when the first *performance* took place; and we are therefore unable to give any report of the *performance*; but for all that, we have heard the *performance* gave the greatest satisfaction."

Another form of this fault is where sentences are lengthened by doubling or accumulating terms closely resembling each other in sense. This practice adds nothing to the sense of the expression; it only serves

to confuse the mind of the reader, and weakens the whole effect of the passage. The following extract from Lord Shaftesbury's "Characteristics" has been often cited as containing a striking example of this form of tautology:—

"Now if the fabric of the *mind* or *temper* appeared to us such as it really is; if we saw it impossible to remove hence any one *good* or *orderly* affection, or to introduce any *ill* or *disorderly* one, without drawing on, in some degree, that dissolute state which, at its height, is confessed to be so miserable, it would then undoubtedly be confessed, that since no *ill*, *immoral*, or *unjust* action can be committed without either a new *inroad* and *breach* on the *temper* and *passions*, or a further advancing of that execution already done; whoever *did ill*, or acted in *prejudice* to his *integrity*, *good nature*, or *worth*, would of necessity act with greater cruelty towards himself than he who scrupled not to swallow what was poisonous, or who with his own hands should voluntarily *mangle* or *wound* his *outward form* or *constitution*, *natural limbs* or *body*."

No one can rise from the perusal of this sentence without a feeling of dissatisfaction, not to say of disgust. The mind is so encumbered with a superfluity of unmeaning words, that the sense of the passage is involved in hopeless confusion, and the whole intention of the author is defeated. And after all this parade and pomp of language, he merely wishes to show that by every vicious action, the mind is as much injured as the body would be by the infliction of a wound.

Another form of tautology is where an adjective expresses nothing more than what is implied in the

meaning of the noun to which it is affixed; as, 'a hollow cavern;' 'umbrageous shade;' 'a round ball;' 'brilliant radiance;' 'a square cube;' 'foul dirt;' 'unmeaning nonsense,' &c.

2. *Pleonasm*. The difference between tautology and pleonasm is, that by the former the sense is repeated; whereas by the latter nothing is added to it. In this sentence, "They returned *back again* to the *same city from* whence they came *forth*," the words 'back,' 'again,' 'same,' 'from,' and 'forth,' are superfluous. They are of no use, they add nothing to the sense, and should therefore be expunged; and the sentence will then stand: "They returned to the city whence they came." "I went home *full of a great many* reflections." If he was *full*, it adds nothing to the sense to say 'a great many.' Better, "I went home full of reflections." "If he happens to have any leisure *upon his hands*" ('upon his hands' is redundant, and may be dispensed with). "The everlasting club treats all other clubs *with an eye of contempt*." The writer might have here said, 'regards' or 'treats' all other clubs with contempt; but to *treat with an eye* is incorrect, as well as pleonastic. The form of sentence beginning, There are . . . which are, &c., is also frequently a pleonasm. It may be occasionally used in introducing a subject, as giving it a certain importance; but, as a rule, it is better to avoid the particle 'there;' and instead of writing, "*There are few people who are not aware,*" &c., say, "Few people are not aware," &c.

The phrases 'more or less,' 'as it were,' 'so to speak,' and some others, are frequently superfluous. They are often introduced merely to occupy space on

the paper, and are, in a great majority of cases, unnecessary to the sense.

Many words called expletives are not on that account always pleonastic. *Do* and *did*, when used as signs of tenses, are frequently indispensable, and sometimes emphatic. In negative and interrogative forms of the verb they are necessary ; as : “ I *do* not think so.” “ *Do* you wish to see him ? ” “ What I *did* publicly affirm then, I *do* affirm now,” &c. But in other cases they are unnecessary, and unidiomatic, and the use of them in modern English is faulty.



EXAMINATION QUESTIONS ON PART V.

1. What is meant by the word “ Style ? ”
2. Whence is this word derived ?
3. Mention some qualities by which style may be characterised.
4. Which is the most important quality of style ?
5. Under what three heads may clearness of style be considered ?
6. What is implied by “ purity ” of style ?
7. Are *any* foreign words admissible into English ?
8. How are obsolete words to be considered ?
9. By what rule should we be guided in the adoption of new words ?
10. What is meant by a grammatical error ?
11. About what period of our literature did English writers begin to pay some attention to grammar ?
12. Give some examples of grammatical errors in the use of pronouns.
13. What is meant by a grammatical inconsistency ?
14. By what rule should we be guided in the *number* of the verb, when *its* subject is a noun of multitude ?

15. In what number must the verb be put, when it has several singular subjects connected by 'or' or 'nor'?
 16. What grammatical errors are frequently made when the words 'each,' 'every,' 'either,' and 'neither' are used as subjects?
 17. What is the general rule for the use of the subjunctive?
 18. When should the indicative mood be used after a conjunction?
 19. What law regulates the sequence of moods and tenses in English grammar?
 20. What kind of adjectives have no degrees of comparison?
 21. What inaccuracies frequently occur in the use of the comparative and superlative degrees?
 22. What is the effect of two negatives in English?
 23. Give some examples of the wrong use of the negative and disjunctive particles.
 24. State some cases in which it is right to use adjectives as adverbs.
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1. What is meant by an idiom?
 2. Give some examples of English idioms.
 3. What faults are frequently made under this head?
 4. To what cause may errors in idiom be referred?
 5. Give some examples of unidiomatic expressions.
 6. In the use of what part of speech do we meet with most mistakes of idiom?
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1. What is meant by propriety of style?
2. State some causes of error in the use of words.
3. When are words said to be synonymous?
4. What classification may be made of synonymous words?
5. Give some examples of English words erroneously used in a foreign sense.
6. Give some cases of incorrect phrases often used.
7. How may obscurity arise from ellipsis?
8. From what other sources does obscurity sometimes arise?
9. What may be remarked, under this head, on the structure of sentences?

10. What is meant by technical terms ?
 11. How far are they admissible in writing on general subjects ?
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1. Show the difference between a concise and a diffusive style.
 2. Which is, on the whole, to be preferred ?
 3. Which is the more difficult to attain ?
 4. What is meant by "Tautology ?"
 5. Describe some forms of tautology.
 6. What is the difference between pleonasm and tautology ?
 7. Give some examples.
- .

PART VI.

ON SENTENCES.

SENTENCES.

A SENTENCE is the expression of some one complete thought; though it is not, of necessity, confined to one proposition.

Sentences are simple or complex. A simple sentence contains *one* member; as, "So saying, *they approached* the gate." Complex sentences contain two members; as, "Straws swim on the surface; but pearls lie at the bottom."

The members themselves are sometimes complex, and may be divided into clauses; as, "The man is arrived, and has brought his son with him; but the magistrate is engaged, and their evidence cannot be now received."

The members are not always separate; one is sometimes inserted in another; as, "When Henry VIII., who was then nineteen years old, ascended the English throne, the nation received him with universal acclamation." Here, 'who was then nineteen years old' is inserted in the proposition, 'When Henry VIII. ascended,' &c.

SIMPLE SENTENCES.

There are degrees of simplicity in sentences. "The master spoke" is as simple a sentence as could be written. "This morning the master spoke severely to the scholars" is also a simple sentence, as it contains but one verb; but it is less simple than the former, as it specifies several circumstances. The simpler the sentence, the less variety of arrangement will it admit of; but even in the simplest, some variety may be introduced.

In English, the order of the simplest sentence generally runs thus: 1. The subject; 2. The verb; 3. The object (when the verb is transitive); or the predicate (when the verb is intransitive). But even this order is sometimes inverted for the sake of vivacity; as, "Great was his astonishment." "Rapid was his fall," &c. It is a question whether any order of words in a sentence should be called natural, for practice differs in this respect in different languages; so that the order which is considered natural in one language is unnatural in another.

Another example of a deviation from the general rule of order is occasionally found in the case of a transitive verb preceded by the objective noun, and followed by a subject; as, "Silver and gold have I none," &c.

In some few cases, viz., of a command, a question, and a supposition, the verb precedes the subject; as, "Come not hither" ('ye' understood). "Were they present?" "Had I thought so," &c.

Very frequently, to give a particular emphasis, an adverb, or a preposition belonging to a compound

verb, begins the sentence; as, "*On* they came." "*Down* fell the tree," &c.

In negations the negative adverb is generally joined to the verb; as, "*I never beheld* such a spectacle." But, to give vivacity to the expression, the adverb is sometimes placed at the beginning of the sentence; as, "*Never* did I behold such a spectacle." "*Not* every man has power to see," &c.

When a sentence begins with (1.) a conjunction; (2.) a call to attention; or (3.) an expletive, the emphatic terms will be as effective in the second part as in the beginning of the sentence; as: 1. "*But these things* we must consider on some future occasion." 2. "*Ladies and gentlemen, the kindness* you have shown me I can never sufficiently appreciate;" and 3. "*There appears* to be a wide difference between these statements."

Conjunctions are said to be unfavourable to vivacity; and certainly nothing is more wearisome or unenlivening than a frequent repetition of them. The figure of speech called by the ancient Greeks *asyndeton*, has a wonderful effect in promoting vivacity of expression. By this figure, all connectives are superseded by the evident and close connection of the propositions themselves. Cæsar's well-known letter, "*I came; I saw; I conquered,*" is an example. If he had written, "*I came, and I saw, and I conquered,*" all the animation and force of the expression would have been lost.

On the other hand, when it is desired that the attention dwell on several objects successively, then repetition of the conjunction becomes not only effective, but in some cases a positive beauty. By the

figure termed *polysyndeton*, connectives coupling single words are continually repeated. Of this the following is a striking example: "While the earth remaineth, seed-time, *and* harvest, *and* cold, *and* heat, *and* summer, *and* winter, *and* day, *and* night, shall not cease."¹

ON COMPLEX SENTENCES.

A celebrated writer on rhetoric divides complex sentences into periods, and, what he calls, loose sentences. A period is a complex sentence, in which the sense is suspended till the whole is brought to a close. The word "period" properly signifies a circuit, and it is applied to such sentences, because we must complete the circuit of the meaning, that is, read them quite through, before we can arrive at their full signification. The following is an example of the period: "Perhaps the reason why common critics are inclined to prefer a judicious and methodical genius to a great and fruitful one, is, because they find it easier for them to pursue their observations through a uniform and bounded work of art, than to comprehend the vast and various extent of nature." The proper test of a period is, that if you stop at the end of any clause, the preceding words

¹ A beautiful example of this figure may be found in Milton's "Paradise Lost," book iii. l. 41, where the poet is bewailing his loss of sight:—

"But not to me returns
Day, *or* the sweet approach of even *or* morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, *or* summer's rose,
Or flocks, *or* herds, *or* human face divine," &c.

will not form determined sense. This is evidently the case with the example above quoted. It is plain that we could not stop at the word 'one;' and when we come to the conjunction 'because,' we must read to the end to understand the whole meaning.

The following are examples of periods :—

“As the whole earth, and the entire duration of those perishing things contained in it, is altogether inconsiderable, or, in the prophet's expressive style, *less than nothing*, in respect of eternity, who sees not that every reasonable man ought to so frame his actions as that they may most effectually contribute to promote his eternal interest?”

“Since it is a truth evident by the light of nature, that there is a sovereign, omniscient Spirit, who alone can make us for ever happy, or for ever miserable, it plainly follows that a conformity to His will, and not any prospect of temporal advantage, is the sole rule whereby every man who acts up to the principles of reason must govern and square his actions.”

“As the sunbeams, united in a burning-glass to a point, have greater force than when they are darted from a plain superficies, so the virtues and actions of one man, drawn together in a single story, strike upon our minds a stronger and more lively impression than the scattered relation of many men and many actions.”

“If we consider to what perfection we know the courses, periods, order, distances, and proportions of the several great bodies of the universe, at least such as fall within our view, we shall have cause to admire the sagacity and industry of the mathematicians, and the power of numbers and geometry well applied.”

“Whether we consider his peculiar significance of expression, or the points of his style; the sweetness of his lyric, or the ease and perspicuity of his moral poems; the sportive severity of his satire, or his talents in wit and humour, Dryden, in point of genius, seems to bear a closer affinity to Horace than to any other ancient or modern author.”

In loose sentences there will be always at least one place before the end, at which, if we stop, the words already written will form complete and independent sense; as, “They next erected a crucifix, and, prostrating themselves before it, returned thanks to God for conducting their voyage to such a happy issue.” Here, if we stop at the word ‘crucifix,’ the sense is perfect in itself. In a period the members depend on each other. In a loose sentence the former members do not, of necessity, depend on the latter; whereas the latter wholly depend on the former. Both these forms of sentence have their advantages and disadvantages. The period would appear the more artificial, and the loose sentence the more natural form of expression. But that style is undoubtedly the best which has a fair admixture of both. Perhaps, in more elevated subjects, where dignity is required, the period should be more frequently introduced; and the loose sentence is better adapted to familiar subjects, such as essays, letters, &c.

Here follow some examples of loose sentences:—

“When a writer has distinguished himself in his studied performances, and delighted us in those works which he intended for our perusal, we become interested in all that concerns him, and wish to be acquainted with his ideas as they flowed, without any

view to their publication in the open communications of a private and friendly correspondence."

"The first and fundamental requisite of epistolary writing is to be natural and simple; for a stiff and laboured manner is as bad in a letter as it is in conversation."

"I consider a generous mind as the noblest work of the creation, and am persuaded, that wherever it resides, no real merit can be wanting."

"The most fertile and populous provinces were converted into deserts, in which were scattered the ruins of villages and cities that afforded shelter to a few miserable inhabitants, whom chance had spared, or the sword of the enemy, wearied with destroying, had spared."

"It was his [Addison's] principal endeavour to avoid all harshness and severity of diction; he is therefore sometimes verbose in his transitions and connections, and sometimes descends too much to the language of conversation; yet, if his language had been less idiomatical, it might have lost somewhat of its genuine Anglicism."

Of these two styles, the periodical and the loose, the following passages are examples:—

"The ambitious spirit of Galerius was scarcely reconciled to the disappointment of his views upon the Gallic provinces, before the unexpected loss of Italy wounded his pride, as well as power, in a still more sensible part. The long absence of the emperors had filled Rome with discontent and indignation; and the people gradually discovered that the preference given to Nicomedia and Milan was not to be ascribed to the particular inclination of Diocletian, but to the

permanent form of government which he had instituted. It was in vain that, a few months after his abdication, his successors dedicated, under his name, those magnificent baths, whose ruins still supply the ground, as well as the materials, for so many churches and convents. The tranquillity of these elegant recesses of ease and luxury was disturbed by the impatient murmurs of the Romans ; and a report was insensibly circulated that the sums expended in erecting those buildings would soon be required at their hands. About that time, the avarice of Galerius, or perhaps the exigences of the state, had induced him to make a very strict and rigorous inquisition into the property of his subjects, for the purpose of a general taxation, both on their lands and on their persons. A very minute survey appears to have been taken of their real estates ; and whenever there was the slightest suspicion of concealment, torture was very freely employed to obtain a sincere declaration of their personal wealth. The privileges which had exalted Italy above the rank of the provinces were no longer regarded ; and the officers of the revenue already began to number the Roman people, and to settle the proportion of the new taxes. Even when the spirit of freedom had been utterly extinguished, the tamest subjects have sometimes ventured to resist an unprecedented invasion of their property ; but on this occasion the injury was aggravated by the insult, and the sense of private interest was quickened by that of national honour."

In this passage the sentences are all of more than ordinary length. Several of them are periods, and the others, though loose sentences, are more than

usually clothed with circumstances. The whole style is lofty and dignified, and is admirably adapted to the importance of the subject.

“ The women, in their turn, learned to be more vain, more gay, and more alluring. They grew studious to please and to conquer. They lost somewhat of the intrepidity and fierceness which before were characteristic of them. They were to affect a delicacy and a weakness. Their education was to be an object of greater attention and care. A finer sense of beauty was to arise. They were to abandon all employments which hurt the shape and deform the body. They were to exert a fancy in dress and ornament. They were to be more secluded from observation. A greater play was to be given to sentiment and anticipation. Greater reserve was to accompany the commerce of the sexes. Modesty was to take the alarm sooner. Gallantry, in all its fashions, and in all its charms, was to unfold itself.”

This way of writing is better suited to gay and sprightly subjects. It moves rapidly, and has more vivacity of expression than one in which the period prevails. But, as before said, that style is the best, in this respect, in which both forms are judiciously mixed together.

We shall now proceed to consider, in detail, the qualities essential to a perfect sentence. These are unity, strength, and harmony.

UNITY IN SENTENCES.

It has been laid down as a principle, that, in every performance of art, the mind should be able to perceive the relation between the whole thing, taken as one

and the various parts of which it is composed; and that without this relation the work is deficient in *unity*. We see a want of unity in the case of those mythological or imaginary beings frequently represented by painters; such as centaurs, satyrs, mermaids, angels, &c. There is no natural connection between the body of a horse and the head of a man; and therefore a painting of a centaur shocks both the sense and taste of the spectator. This principle of *unity* is applicable to composition, which is governed by the same laws as any other art; and in single sentences, which are but parts of a composition, we naturally expect to find it.

1. *Every sentence should consist of one leading proposition*, together with, when expedient, its attendant propositions or circumstances. But incongruous ideas should never be pressed together into one sentence. Things which have no connection in nature should not be put together in art; and thoughts that are different from each other should be expressed in different sentences. Some examples of violations of this rule here follow:—

“In this uneasy state, both of private and public life, Cicero was oppressed by a new and cruel affliction, the death of his beloved Tullia, which happened soon after her divorce from Dolabella, whose manners and humours were entirely disagreeable to her.”

If the author had closed his sentence with the word ‘Dolabella,’ no defect of unity would have appeared. The main proposition is concerning Cicero’s affliction at his daughter’s death, and the time at which this took place is naturally enough added to it. But the effect is spoiled by the allusion to Dolabella’s character,

which, had the author thought proper, might have made a separate sentence.

The following sentences are open to the same sort of exception :—

“ He (Archbishop Tillotson) was exceedingly beloved both by King William and Queen Mary, who nominated Dr. Tennison, Bishop of Lincoln, to succeed him.”

“ After we came to anchor, they put me on shore, where I was welcomed by all my friends, who received me with the greatest kindness.”

“ Their march was through an uncultivated country, whose savage inhabitants fared hardly, having no other riches than a breed of lean sheep, whose flesh was rank and unsavoury, by reason of their continual feeding upon sea-fish.”

“ He is supposed to have fallen, by his father's death, into the hands of his uncle, a vintner, near Charing Cross, who sent him for some time to Dr. Busby, at Westminster; but, not intending to give him any education beyond that of the school, took him, when he was well advanced in literature, to his own house, where the Earl of Dorset, celebrated for patronage of genius, found him by chance, as Burnet relates, reading Horace, and was so well pleased with his proficiency, that he undertook the care and cost of his education.”

This one sentence conducts us through a considerable portion of the life of the poet Prior. We are informed of—1. The loss of his father. 2. His adoption by his uncle. 3. His being sent to Westminster School. 4. His progress in learning. 5. His leaving school. 6. His introduction to the Earl of Dorset.

7. His reading Horace; and 8. His being maintained at the university by the Earl of Dorset.

“To this succeeded that licentiousness which entered with the Restoration; and from infecting our religion and morals, fell to corrupt our language; which last was not like to be much improved by those who, at that time, made up the Court of King Charles II.: either such who had followed him in his banishment, or who had been altogether conversant in the dialect of those fanatic times; or young men who had been educated in the same company; so that the Court, which used to be the standard of propriety and correctness of speech, was then, and I think hath ever since continued, the worst school in England for that accomplishment; and so will remain till better care be taken in the education of our young nobility, that they may set out into the world with some foundation of literature, in order to qualify them for patterns of politeness.”

It is impossible for any one to digest so many facts, observations, and reasonings as are here presented to the mind in one sentence.

The subjoined sentence is extracted from a work published in London this year (1857):—

“Unfortunately, coming into the possession of the estate, my father must turn farmer, and, like him I have before compared him to, and I have often thought, since reading the works of Cobbett, that there was a similarity in their thoughts on many subjects, he soon began to farm at a fearful loss (for to be a gainful farmer, so farmers hold, or rather they did then, a man should properly be trained to it from his youth); he was forced to trust to others to do what he should

himself have done, and being still occupied in his professional pursuits at Norwich, his visits to the hall and to the estate were but occasional, and the eye of the master was but too often absent. His family, however, resided there, consisting of his wife and four children — Charles, Henry, Harriet, and Alfred — and there his affections were centred, so that it cannot be wondered at that, with a divided duty, and the course pursued, ere many years (but I am now forestalling) the estate soon became involved, and actually he was compelled to part with it at a loss, or rather with no gain; for, at the time of the sale, which happened at a period during the long war, land fell of a sudden greatly in value, and the seller was glad to experience the truth of the old saying,—

‘ When house and land and all are spent,
Then learning is most excellent.’ ”

This sentence needs no comment.

2. *Abstract and concrete ideas should never be forced together in the same grammatical government ; as :—*

“ On every side, they rose in multitudes, armed with rustic *weapons* and with irresistible *fury*.”

But when the writer wishes to put things in a ridiculous light, this is done with great effect ; as :—

“ He took his *hat* and *leave*.” “ He was delivered from the *ditch* and all his *fears*.” “ He is surely much happier in this noble condescension . . . than if he kept himself aloof from his subjects, continually wrapped up in his own *importance* and imperial *fur*,” &c.

Parentheses.

In speaking of the general structure of sentences, we had occasion to remark that, as a rule, long parentheses should be avoided. They interfere both with the unity and the beauty of a sentence. They keep the reader too long in suspense about the definite meaning, and break the flow and easy movement of the writing. These objections are felt to be so well founded, that a parenthetical style is now out of fashion, though occasionally affected by some of our most eminent living authors. The following extracts will serve to illustrate the disagreeable effect of parentheses:—

“It was an ancient tradition, that when the capital was founded by one of the Roman kings, the god Terminus (who presided over boundaries, and was represented, according to the fashion of that age, by a large stone,) alone, among all the inferior deities, refused to yield his place to Jupiter himself.”

“When this parliament sat down (for it deserves our particular observation that both houses were full of zeal for the present government, and of resentment against the late usurpations), there was but one party in parliament, and no other party could raise its head in the nation.”

“Though Fame, who is always the herald of the great, has seldom deigned to transmit the exploits of the lower ranks to posterity (for it is commonly the fate of those whom fortune has placed in the vale of obscurity, to have their noble acts buried in oblivion), yet, in their verses, the minstrels have preserved many instances of domestic woe and felicity.”

Such forms as, 'if I may be allowed the word,' 'if I may hazard the remark,' 'if I may so express myself,' &c., are open to the same objection as longer parentheses; and even shorter insertions, such as, 'in some sense,' 'as it were,' 'so to speak,' &c., should be introduced very sparingly, and not too frequently. The following sentence of Fielding's is exceptionable in this particular:—

"The most astounding instance of respect, so frequently paid to Nothing, is when it is paid (if I may so express myself) to something less than Nothing,—when the person who receives it is not only void of the qualities for which he is respected, but is in reality notoriously guilty of vices directly opposite to the virtues whose applause he receives. This, indeed, is the highest degree of Nothing, or (if I may be allowed the word), the Nothingest of all Nothings."

3. *When a sentence arrives at its natural close, nothing more should be added.* We frequently find, when we come to what seems the proper conclusion of a sentence, that some extraneous remark, not quite to the purpose, or not in keeping with the main thought, is appended. Such an addition directly tends to spoil the effect by interfering with the compactness and unity of a period. For example, Sir William Temple, speaking of Burnet and Fontenelle, says:—

"The first could not end his learned treatise without a panegyric of modern learning and knowledge in comparison of the ancients; and the other falls so grossly into the censure of the old poetry, and preference of the new, that I could not read either of these

strains without indignation, which no quality among men is so apt to raise in me as sufficiency,—the worst composition out of the pride and ignorance of mankind.”

The proper close of this sentence is at the word ‘indignation.’ What is added is foreign to the purpose, and should be retrenched.

“All the world acknowledgeth the *Æneid* to be the most perfect in its kind; and, considering the disadvantage of the language, and the severity of the Roman Muse, the poem is still more wonderful, since, without the liberty of the Grecian poets, the diction is so great and noble, so clear, so forcible and expressive, so chaste and pure, that even all the strength and compass of the Greek tongue, joined to Homer’s fire, cannot give us stronger and clearer ideas than the great Virgil hath set before our eyes; some few instances excepted, in which Homer, through the force of genius, hath excelled.”

This sentence would be considerably improved by inserting the awkward appendage, now at the end, after the conjunction ‘that;’ thus: “. . . the diction is so chaste and pure, that, some few instances excepted,” &c.; . . . “even all the strength,” &c.

STRENGTH IN SENTENCES.

A sentence is said to possess strength when its words and clauses are so arranged as to convey the author’s meaning most impressively. To effect this, (1.) it should be cleared of all superfluous words. On this subject we have already made some observations under the head of “Tautology,” and, therefore, one or

two more examples of redundancy will be here sufficient. "This is so clear a proposition, that I rest the *whole* argument *entirely* upon it." (Either 'whole' or 'entirely' should be expunged.) "Saul and his companions journeying *along their way* to Damascus." (The words in italics are unnecessary.)

Adjectives.

2. One cause of this form of diffusiveness is the immoderate use of adjectives. When judiciously applied, adjectives have a powerful influence in heightening and animating the expression; but when used unsparingly, they do but overburden the sentence, without adding to its meaning, and show an affectation and a pedantic straining after effect. Such relative and general terms as 'great,' 'good,' &c., ought not to be used too lavishly. A '*great*' argument would be often better a '*forcible*' or '*striking*' argument; in a '*great*' degree, better in a '*high*' degree; '*good*' measure may be '*full*' measure, and a '*good*' hand a '*skilful*' hand, &c.

The same remark is applicable to adverbs. '*Very*' would be often better expressed by '*truly*,' or '*really*;' '*beautifully*' and '*nicely*' by '*admirably*' and '*neatly*.' These remarks do not exhaust the subject, but it is hoped they may prove useful in drawing the learner's attention to this point. Adjectives and adverbs are the words which colour and give tone to language; they paint the picture, and characterise expression. Hence, much of the vigour and power of writing depends upon their judicious application.

Connectives.

3. One of the most difficult points in constructing sentences is the management of *connectives* ; for both the grace and the strength of a period will, in a great measure, depend on the skill with which its clauses are joined together. Connective particles are used in a variety of ways, and no positive rules can be laid down for their application. In this matter we must study the practice of the greatest writers. We shall here show some cases in which the connection of the clauses has been ungracefully or awkwardly managed.

When one term is governed by two different prepositions it has always a harsh as well as an enfeebling effect ; as, "Socrates was invited *to*, and Euripides entertained *at* his court." Here we have both an ellipsis and a suspension of the sense ; so that the effect is doubly disagreeable.

The copulative conjunction 'and' is often unnecessarily repeated, as in the following passage from one of Tillotson's sermons :—

"*And* then those who are of an inferior condition, that they labour *and* be diligent in the work of an honest calling, for this is privately good *and* profitable unto men *and* to their families ; *and* to those who are above this necessity, *and* are in better capacity to maintain good works properly so called, works of piety, *and* charity, *and* justice ; that they be careful to promote *and* advance them, according to their power *and* opportunity, because these things are publicly good *and* beneficial to mankind."

In this sentence, the conjunction 'and' is introduced eleven times.

The omission of relative particles, where it does not affect the perspicuity, is favourable to the strength of a sentence; as, "The faith he professed, and of which he became an apostle, was not his invention."

The omission of the relative here makes the sentence more compact, and also avoids an unnecessary repetition. Again: "The officers and soldiers were prepared for the part they were to act." "The sole evidence we can have of the veracity of an historian consists in such collateral documents as are palpable to all, and can admit of no falsification."

Important Words.

4. *Important words* should occupy a conspicuous place in a sentence. But the place to be assigned to them must depend chiefly on the construction. Though we should adopt the order most favourable to perspicuity, the most important words are in general placed at the beginning; for example:—

"*Age*, that lessens life, increases our desire of living." "Most of the *trades, professions, and ways of living* among mankind take their origin either from the love of pleasure or the fear of want." "*The wise and virtuous man* is at all times willing that his own private interest should be sacrificed to the public interest of his own particular society."

On the other hand, it is sometimes advisable to reserve the more emphatic terms for the end of a sentence, especially where the author wishes that such words should make a deep impression. In this case the sense is suspended, and the whole meaning is developed at the close of the period; for example:—

“Why their knowledge is more than ours, I know not what reason can be given but *the uns earachable will of the Supreme Being.*”

It is clear that if this order were inverted, the sentence would lose much of its strength and effect. Again :—

“On whatever side we contemplate Homer, what principally strikes us is *his wonderful invention.*”

But in whatever part of the sentence we place the principal idea, it is always of the highest importance that it be clearly perceived. It should stand forth prominently ; and any circumstances of time, place, manner, &c., which may be necessary to add, should be so disposed as not to interfere with the leading thought of the period. This rule has been disregarded in the following sentence :—

“And that it was not peculiar to the gift of language or tongues only, to be given at the moment of its exertion, but common likewise to all the rest, will be shown probably, on some other occasion, more at large, in a particular treatise, which is already prepared by me, on that subject.”

Insignificant Words.

5. We should avoid closing a sentence with comparatively insignificant words. Adverbs and prepositions, though useful as qualifiers or connectives, ought not to be placed at the close of a period, where the mind would naturally dwell on their meaning, and would thus be distracted from the more significant parts of the sentence. Sometimes, however, to mark an emphasis, or to express a strong contrast, such a disposition of words is properly adopted, as in the case

of the following:—"In their prosperity, my friends shall never hear of me; in their adversity, *always*." Here the antithesis is well managed, and the two adverbs, being emphatic, are so placed as to make a deeper impression.

But in other instances we find such words unskillfully placed; as: "The other species of motion are incidentally blended *also*." "This agreement of mankind is not confined to the taste *solely*," &c.

Some writers on style are of opinion that we should avoid finishing a sentence with a preposition governing a previous noun or pronoun. This rule will apply to the higher subjects of composition; but the form is idiomatic and admissible in lighter writings, such as dialogues, letters, &c. Such verbs as 'to carry *on*,' 'to look *into*,' 'to escape *from*,' &c., are those to which the above remark will apply. There is no objection to the expressions, "The trade which the inhabitants carried *on*;" "This is not what I object *to*," &c., at the close of a sentence in a familiar style. But it is better to avoid such endings when writing on more elevated or more serious subjects, and in this view the following sentences are open to criticism:—

"I therefore thought it necessary to fix and determine the notion of these two words, as I intend to make use of them in the thread of my following speculations, that the reader may conceive rightly what is the subject which I proceed *upon*." "There need (?) no more than to make such a registry only voluntary to avoid all the difficulties that can be raised, and which are not too captious, or too trivial, to take notice *of*." "It is absurd to think of judging either Ariosto or Spenser by precepts which they did not attend *to*."

ON ANTITHESIS.

A period, when well constructed, has more strength than a loose sentence, because the energy is diffused throughout the latter ; whereas, in the former, it is concentrated into one point. Generally, a period should consist of but four members ; but it is not necessary to adhere strictly to this rule. Good sense and cultivated taste are the best guides to direct us to avoid both prolixity and intricacy.

The kind of period that has most vivacity is where there is antithesis in the members, *i. e.*, where the words stand in contrast to each other, the opposite members being similarly constructed. This form is not only the most effective, but also, in general, the most perspicuous ; for the relation of the parts to each other is here so strongly marked, that it is next to impossible to mistake the meaning ; for example :—

“If you seek to make any one rich, study not to increase his stores, but to diminish his desires.”

The following is a specimen of double antithesis :—

“If Cato may be censured, severely indeed, but justly, for abandoning the cause of liberty, which he would not, however, survive, what shall we say of those who embrace it faintly, pursue it irresolutely, grow tired of it when they have much to hope, and give it up when they have nothing to fear?”

Here follows another specimen of this figure, in which the author, in his anxiety to construct the clauses alike, has fallen into a strange error :—

“Eloquence, that leads mankind by the ears, gives a nobler superiority than power, that every dunce may

use, or fraud, that every knave may employ, to lead them by the nose."

On this antithetical period, a critic remarks, "Here the two intermediate clauses are contrasted, so are also the first and last. But there is this difference. In the intermediate members there is a justness in the thought as well as in the expression — an essential requisite in this figure. In the other two members, the antithesis is merely verbal, and is, therefore, at best, but a trifling play upon the words. We see the connexion which eloquence has with the ears, but it would puzzle Œdipus himself to discover the connexion which either power or fraud has with the nose. The author, to make out the contrast, is in this instance, obliged to betake himself to low and senseless cant."

Sometimes the antithesis is not found in the different clauses of the same sentence, but in consecutive sentences ; as, "He can bribe, but he cannot seduce." "He can buy, but he cannot gain." "He can lie, but he cannot deceive."

This figure may be found in loose sentences, as well as in periods ; as :—

"They are designed to assert and vindicate the honour of the Revolution, of the principles established, of the means employed, and of the ends obtained by it. They are designed to explode our former distinctions, and to unite men of all denominations in the support of these principles, in the defence of these means, and in the pursuit of these ends." Here a varied opposition in the words *principles*, *means*, and *ends* may be observed.

In the next extract, we find an antithesis on the

words *true* and *just* running through three successive sentences:—"The anecdotes here related were true, and the reflections made upon them were just, many years ago. The former would not have been related, if he who related them had not known them to be true; nor the latter have been made, if he who made them had not thought them just; and if they were true and just then, they must be true and just now, and always."

In some cases, the words contrasted in the second clause are the same as those used in the first; only, the construction and arrangement are inverted; as, "The old may inform the young, and the young may animate the old."

Whatever may be said of the artificial construction of which the antithesis bears internal evidence, it is undoubtedly favourable both to strength and perspicuity; and though this figure is not equally well adapted to every style, it is successfully used in many forms of composition.

Antithesis is applied with great effect in delineating character. But an immoderate use of this figure is a serious fault in style. It imparts to it a studied and laboured effect, and gives us the idea that the writer pays more attention to his manner of expression than to the subject. This observation will apply to the following passages:—

"Homer was the greater genius, Virgil the better artist; in the one we most admire the man, in the other, the work. Homer hurries us with a commanding impetuosity; Virgil leads us with an attractive majesty. Homer scatters with a generous profusion; Virgil bestows with a careful magnificence. Homer,

like the Nile, pours out his riches with a sudden overflow; Virgil, like a river in its banks, with a constant stream. And when we look upon their machines, Homer seems like his own Jupiter in his terrors, shaking Olympus, scattering the lightnings, and firing the heavens; Virgil, like the same power in his benevolence, counselling with the gods, laying plans for empires, and ordering his whole creation."

Though, according to some critics, this picture would have been more finished had some particular river been opposed to the Nile, no one can fail to perceive the consummate art displayed throughout the whole passage. But Pope has not here exemplified the principle that "The highest art is to conceal art." The chief objection to the passage is, that we have in it too much of the same figure; the continual repetition of the same construction becomes at length wearisome, and its very artificiality makes it fail to produce the intended effect.

Lastly, a resemblance in language and construction should be maintained between the constructive members of an antithetical sentence. Errors in this particular are found, firstly, in words; as:—

"I have observed, of late, the style of some great *ministers* very much to exceed that of any other *productions*" (authors). "I cannot but fancy, however, that this imitation, which passes so currently with other *judgments*, must, at some time or other, have stuck a little with *your lordship*." (Say, passes so currently with *others*.)

Secondly, it is a still greater fault to change the construction in such cases; as:—

"There may remain a suspicion that we overrate

the greatness of his (Shakspeare's) genius, in the same manner as bodies appear more gigantic on account of their being disproportioned and misshapen."

Thirdly, the corresponding parts should be of nearly the same length, and not as in the following passage: "As the performance of all other religious duties will not avail in the sight of God *without charity*; so neither will the discharge of all other ministerial duties avail in the sight of men, *without a faithful discharge of this principal duty.*"

It will be for the learner to point out the errors of this description which may be found in the following sentence:—

"Ministers are answerable for everything done to the prejudice of the constitution, in the same proportion as the preservation of the constitution in its purity and vigour, or the perverting and weakening it, are of greater consequence to the nation than any other instances of good or bad government."

Examples of antithetical Sentences.

1. "If we must needs compare Cicero, therefore, with Cato, as some writers affect to do, it is certain that if Cato's virtue seem more splendid in theory, Cicero's will be found superior in practice; the one was romantic, the other rational; the one drawn from the refinements of schools, the other from nature and social life; the one always unsuccessful, often hurtful, the other always beneficial, often salutary to the republic."

2. "A cultivated taste, combined with a creative imagination, constitutes genius in the Fine Arts. Without taste, imagination could only produce a

random analysis and combination of our conceptions ; and without imagination, taste would be destitute of the faculty of invention."

3. "He [Cassius] was brave, witty, learned ; yet passionate, fierce, and cruel : so that Brutus was the more amiable friend ; he the more dangerous enemy."

4. "It would appear that there are two opposite extremes into which men are apt to fall in preparing themselves for the duties of active life. The one arises from habits of abstraction and generalisation carried to an excess ; the other from a minute, an exclusive, and an unenlightened attention to the objects and events which happen to fall under their actual experience."

5. "The perfection of political wisdom does not consist in an indiscriminate zeal against reforms ; but in a gradual and prudent accommodation of established institutions to the varying opinions, manners, and circumstances of mankind."

HARMONY IN SENTENCES.

It cannot be too frequently repeated that perspicuity is the essential quality of good writing, and that this should take precedence of every other consideration. But language may be regarded not only as an instrument of utility ; it is capable of embellishment, and may minister to our pleasures as well as to our necessities. Admitting it to be of the first importance that a communication, whether written or spoken, should be clearly understood, it is surely much more agreeable that the language be expressed in an elegant and harmonious, than in a harsh and ungraceful manner. This quality, then, harmony of

style, we now propose to discuss,—to lay down rules respecting this branch of the art, and to show what errors should be avoided by the student in endeavouring to acquire an harmonious and graceful style of composition.

The word “harmony,” which is of Greek derivation, originally signified a power of adapting or fitting one thing to another. This was its primary, concrete sense. But it has now lost this meaning, and has only an abstract signification. In music, harmony is the effect produced by sounds that naturally fit to each other, or have a mutual sympathy. Socially speaking, it refers to the condition of those persons whose dispositions are adapted or suited to each other; and as applied to language it has a similar acceptation, viz., it is that quality of beauty, derived from combined sound and sense, which is naturally fitted to give pleasure to the mind.

Harmony of language may be considered under three heads,—choice of words, arrangement of words, and proportion of parts.

English has been often accused of harshness, and it certainly cannot be ranked among the most harmonious languages of Europe. But, if not the most beautiful in this respect, neither can it be said, on the other hand, that it is the most disagreeable; for though inferior in harmony to Italian and Spanish, it ranks higher than Dutch, or any of the Scandinavian, or the Slavonic languages. Since, however, even in the most melodious languages, some writers are known to be far more studious of elegance and beauty than others, it follows that in authors who write in the most rugged dialect, this difference will also

appear. Whatever, then, may be said of the want of softness in the English language, it is plain, as some of our writers surpass others in harmony, that this is a quality to be cultivated; and there is no good reason why any one gifted with a delicate ear, may not under the guidance of a judicious teacher, attain the power of writing in an easy and flowing style.

First, as to choice of words. To those who have not a natural perception of the difference between soft and harsh sounds, any remarks on this subject would be utterly vain. Some may possibly be in this condition; but the author is disposed to believe that such persons are exceptions to the rule, and that, in general, no instruction is required to prove that one word is softer or harsher than another. Concerning the causes of this difference, a few observations may, however, be useful.

Two points here require attention:—1, the final consonant of a word, and 2, the sound of the vowels.

The English alphabet may be arranged in the following manner:—

Consonants {	Labials.	Gutturals.	Palatals.	Dentals.	Sibilants.
	Soft.				
	b	g	d	v	z
	Hard				
	p	c k	t	f	s
Vowels	a	e	i	o	u w y
Liquids, or semi-vowels . . . }	l	m	n	r	
Aspirates	h	qu			
Double letters . .	x = ks	„	j = dg		

In the above arrangement of the consonants, the upper line contains those which sound more softly, especially as finals. Those in the lower line are their corresponding hard consonants. Thus, apart from the sense, the word 'slab' has a less harsh effect than 'slap.' Again, 'bag' is softer than 'back;' 'played' than 'plot;,' 'stave' than 'staff;,' and 'gaze' than 'gas.' The same is also true, though perhaps not in the same degree, of these consonants, when used as initials.

In English, the vowels have, generally, three sounds; for example:—

	<i>Open.</i>	<i>Double.</i>	<i>Close.</i>
a is sounded in	'far,'	in 'fate'	in 'fat.'
e "	'scene,'	'here,'	'met.'
i "		'mine,'	'sin.'
o "	'for,'	'more,'	'sot.'
u "	'rule,'	'tune,'	'tun.'

The liquids give a flowing softness to words, and those in which they abound are particularly beautiful; as, 'lonely,' 'noontide,' 'moving,' 'roaming.'

As a general rule, words ending in soft consonants, and having open or double vowels, are preferable, in point of sound, to those with hard final consonants and close vowels. Accordingly, the dissyllables 'beauty,' 'confine,' 'abased,' will have more harmony than 'proper,' 'defend,' 'detect;,' and the trisyllables 'mountaineer,' 'usual,' 'violence,' are softer words than 'liberty,' 'elegance,' 'reference,' 'adequate.'

In selecting harmonious words, we should reject such as have close vowels, combined with clusters of

consonants; as, 'struggling,' 'disrespect,' 'scratched,' 'strengthened,' &c. These are among the most disagreeably sounding words of our language.

The genius of the English language frequently throws back the accent to the first syllable of many long words; as 'péremptorily,' 'législature,' 'mé-morable,' 'am'bulatory,' &c. The necessity to pronounce so many short syllables after the accent, makes such words extremely unmusical, and very ineligible as regards beauty of sound.

It cannot be expected, however, that style should be always equally harmonious. When it is necessary to express harsh ideas, our language should be correspondingly rugged; and, though we need not be too elaborate in this matter, a cultivated taste and judgment will always direct us in some measure to suit the sound to the sense. There are several striking examples of this power of adapting sound to sense in Milton; as—

"So stretched out, huge in length, the arch-fiend lay."

What a graphic picture of enormous size do these monosyllables convey! The place of the accent on 'fiend,' and the open vowels falling on the unaccented parts of the line, powerfully contribute to heighten the effect, and show the consummate art of the poet. Again:—

"Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth," &c.

How smoothly and softly the lines run! See the effect of the alliteration in the first line—slow, silent,

stream—and observe the singular accumulation of liquid letters throughout the passage.

The following extract from one of Southey's poems is quite a curiosity in our literature, and powerfully proves the force and fertility of the English language. The whole poem contains more than one hundred and fifty adjectives, all applied to the falling of water down a cascade :—

“How does the water come down at Lodore ?

Here it comes sparkling,
And there it lies darkling ;
Rising and leaping,
Sinking and creeping ;
Swelling and flinging,
Showering and springing,
Eddying and whisking,
Spouting and frisking,
Twining and twisting,
Around and around
With endless rebound.

And falling and crawling and sprawling,
And driving and riving and striving,
And sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling,
And sounding and bounding and rounding,
And bubbling and troubling and doubling,
Dividing and gliding and sliding,
And grumbling and rumbling and tumbling,
And clattering and battering and shattering ;
And gleaming and steaming, and streaming and beaming,
And rushing and flushing, and brushing and gushing,
And flapping and rapping, and clapping and slapping,
And curling and whirling, and purling and twirling,
Retreating and beating, and meeting and sheeting,
Delaying and straying, and playing and spraying,
Advancing and prancing, and glancing and dancing,

And so never ending, but always ascending,
 Sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending
 All as thou and all I am, with a mighty uproar,
 And this way the water comes down at Lahore."

One cause of the comparative harshness of the English language may be its monosyllabic character, especially in that part of it derived from Anglo-Saxon. This quality may occasionally produce strength, but it is certainly unfavourable to harmony. The constant recurrence of words of one syllable has not only a rugged, but a wearisome and monotonous effect; and for this reason we should avoid using too many monosyllables together. Take the passage in the Church Catechism: "My duty towards God is to believe in Him, to fear Him, and to love Him, with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship Him, to give Him thanks, to put my whole trust in Him, to call upon Him, to honour His holy Name and His Word, and to serve Him truly all the days of my life."

Here, out of seventy words, sixty-three are monosyllables.

Take a passage from Shakspeare's "Macbeth:"—

"That is a step
 On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
 For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires,
 Let not light see my black and deep desires,
 The eye wink at the hand. Yet let that be
 Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see."

In this passage, out of fifty-two words, we have but two dissyllables; 'o'erleap,' a compound Saxon word, and 'desires,' derived through French from

Latin. It may be also observed, by the way, that every word in this passage, with the exception of 'desires,' is of Anglo-Saxon origin. A combination of monosyllables, when they are judiciously selected and arranged by the masterly hand of a Shakspeare, may not produce so harsh an effect ; but, as a general rule, it is better to intersperse words of a different number of syllables in a sentence. This, at any rate, will give our style some variety, and will make it, if not actually musical, less open to objection on the score of harshness.

Two consecutive sentences, or clauses in the same sentence, should not begin, nor end, with the same word ; as :—

"Every nature, you perceive, is either too excellent to want *it*, or too base to be capable of *it*."

"The general idea of good or bad fortune, therefore, creates some concern for the person who has met with *it* ; but the general idea of provocation excites no sympathy with the anger of the man who has received *it*. Nature, *it* seems, teaches us to be more averse to enter into this passion, and, till informed of *its* cause, to be disposed rather to take part against *it*."

In this passage we have the pronoun *it* concluding members of sentences three times successively. It is surprising that this could be done by any writer of taste.

"'T were to be wished, that those amongst us who either write or read with a view to employ their liberal leisure (for as to such as do either from views more sordid, we leave them, like slaves, to their destined drudgery) ; 't were to be wished, I say, that the liberal (if they have a relish for letters) would inspect

the finished models of Grecian literature ; that they would not waste those hours, which they cannot recall, upon the meaner productions of the French and English press ; upon that fungous growth of novels and pamphlets, where, *'t is to be feared*, they rarely find any rational pleasure, and, more rarely still, any solid enjoyment."

What with repetition of forms, and parentheses, this sentence could not well have been made more unmusical.

There should be no rhymes in consecutive clauses, or members of a sentence :—

"It is quite proper that a character should be pervaded by a spirit of *humility* ; but this feeling should never be allowed to degenerate into *servility*."

"On this *occasion* the question gave rise to much *agitation*, and soon after absorbed every other *consideration*."

These clauses ending in words of a similar sound, give a disagreeable jangle to the whole sentence. In rhyming verse, the case is, of course, different ; but in prose composition, every form of echo should be carefully avoided.

Alliteration, or the practice of making several words in succession begin with the same letter, was the principle on which the Anglo-Saxon poets constructed their verses. Langland, who immediately preceded Chaucer, begins his poem of "Piers Plowman,"—

"In a summer season, when soft was the sun,
I shoop me into shrouds, as I a sheep were," &c.,

but this practice, though still partially retained in our later poetry, should never be allowed a place in

prose composition. Here it becomes a mere puerility, destroying the variety which is so necessary to harmony, and calling off our attention from the sense to the mere sound of the language.

Some writers, however, have, perhaps inadvertently, adopted this alliterative form ; Alison makes Napoleon say of Sir Sydney Smith : “ That *man made me miss my destiny.*”

ARRANGEMENT.

The beauty of a piece of writing depends, in a great measure, on the arrangement of its words and clauses. It should be so managed, that the words flow naturally and gracefully, with as few interruptions as possible to its onward course. For this reason, insertions in wrong places, and repeated parentheses, should be carefully avoided. Parenthetical clauses which qualify the sense of a proposition are often necessary ; but they should be so placed as not to interrupt the flow of the language. A parenthetical style is abrupt and ungraceful ; it keeps the reader perpetually in suspense, and when he thinks he has arrived at the conclusion of a sentence, he meets with new and unexpected qualifying expressions which continually interfere with the meaning, and thus considerably lessen the pleasure he would otherwise derive from its perusal. The following quotation from one of Tillotson’s sermons is strikingly faulty in point of arrangement, and the whole passage is harsh and unmusical :—

“ One might be apt to think, at first view, that this parable was overdone, and wanted something of a

true decorum; it being hardly credible, that a man, after he had been so mercifully dealt withal, as, upon his humble request, to have so huge a debt so freely forgiven, should, whilst the memory of so much mercy was fresh upon him, even in the very next moment, handle his fellow-servant, who had made the same humble request to him which he had done to his lord, with so much roughness and cruelty, for so inconsiderable a sum."

With regard to sound, the part of a sentence or period requiring the most attention is its cadence. As in a phrase of music, the last few notes played or sung leave the most pleasing effect; so, in a sentence, the last few words, when well selected and arranged, produce the most agreeable impression. It has been before remarked, that words having open vowels and soft final consonants are generally the most melodious; and this quality particularly adapts them for cadences. Words of three or of four syllables are more eligible for this purpose; and nouns or verbs should be used rather than adjectives or pronouns. It has been pronounced by a high authority, that a word of four syllables, accented on the first and third, such as 'ob'serva'tion,' 'cir'cumstan'tial,' 'un'derstan'ding,' &c., is the most musical we can adopt for the close of a period. One of three syllables, with an open vowel, and the accent on the second, will also make a very pleasing cadence; such as 'enjoy'ment,' 'contri'vance,' 'propor'tion,' &c. It must be remembered that these are merely suggestions; for it would, of course, be impossible to make every sentence end in such words. The object is simply to draw the learner's attention to

such forms of language as are most harmonious, and to recommend him to use them whenever circumstances will allow of their adoption.

What has been observed of the cadence is also applicable, though not in the same degree, to the endings of the other members of sentences. Here, adjectives and pronouns may be more frequently used, attention being directed to the selection of those which have an agreeable sound.

Lastly, the cadence of a period should never be elliptical : when the reader is obliged mentally to supply the words omitted in a cadence, the result is always unsatisfactory, both as to sound and sense.

But we should steadfastly bear in mind that harmony in composition must never appear the effect of labour ; and that the gravest offence against the art of writing is to allow the musical tone of a cadence to interfere with the sense or strength of the expression.

PROPORTION.

The principle of proportion, on which some remarks were made, under the head of "Unity in Sentences," is indispensable to harmony. It consists in the arrangement of the parts of a composition in such a way that they exhibit a just relation to the whole piece of writing. There is something disagreeable to our nature in seeing the parts of any object out of proportion. A sense of beauty is always conveyed by the contemplation of an object whose parts are in a proper relation to the whole thing and to each other. We may not be always sensible of the cause of these feelings ; but

the truth is, that our pleasure or pain in beholding any thing is produced, in a great measure, by the proportion or the disproportion of its parts. Now, of this principle we must not only be cognisant, we must put it into practice in writing. Therefore, in constructing sentences, we should be careful not to make a very wide difference in the length of their members. All the clauses should approach each other in length. A long introduction, followed by a proposition expressed in but few words, would be criticised as written in very bad taste ; and a like unfavourable opinion would probably be passed on one in which a leading proposition begins and all the rest of the sentence consists of an accumulation of circumstances. In either of these cases, the sentence would be out of proportion.

The same principle is applicable to consecutive sentences. A very long, followed by a very short sentence, would be open to objection on similar grounds. The sentences cannot, of course, be all equally long ; this, for many reasons, is not desirable ; but the rhythm of the periods should be varied, and the clauses should be pretty nearly, though not quite, of the same length.

We should never commence a piece of writing with a very long sentence, as this will often have a discouraging effect on the reader. It is better to begin by stating the case closely and concisely, in a few short sentences ; and in the after part of the composition a greater variety in their length may be introduced.

Lastly, this principle of proportion should be observed throughout a whole composition, whether theme, essay, fable, or letter. To write a long in-

troduction, and say but little concerning the subject itself, will be as disagreeable as a piece of writing to which either the introduction or the conclusion is wanting.

The attentive reader must have perceived that all the rules here laid down are rather cautions against the commission of faults than instructions how to proceed in composing. These remarks, it is hoped, may guard the young writer against errors into which he is likely to fall; but he must not expect that they will of themselves produce excellence or beauty of style. Nothing but continual and careful practice will insure his proficiency in this study. Let him write, but continually and carefully; for careless or inattentive writing, instead of improving him, will, no doubt, have a directly contrary effect. And he should not only write; it is recommended that he occasionally select an extract from some eminent author, for the purpose of criticism. The heads under which the general subjects of construction and style have been here treated, will suggest points for his consideration; and thus, by studying the best writers for the sake of their style, as well as their subject, he will insensibly improve both his taste and judgment; he will become a better critic of general literature, and, at the same time, insure improvement in his own compositions.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS ON PART VI.

1. What is a sentence ?
2. How are sentences here classified ?
3. What is a simple sentence ?
4. Write a simple sentence.
5. Show how there may be degrees of simplicity in sentences.
6. What is the usual order of a simple sentence ?
7. In what cases is this order inverted ? Give examples.
8. What is meant by the figure "Asyndeton ?"
9. What is its effect ?
10. What is the figure "Polysyndeton," and in what cases is it applicable ?
11. What is a complex sentence ?
12. What division is made of complex sentences ?
13. What is a period ?
14. What is the proper test of a period ?
15. What is a loose sentence ?
16. What general difference of character is found between the period and the loose sentence ?
17. In what cases are the period and the loose sentence respectively applicable ?
18. What qualities are essential to a perfect sentence ?
19. What is meant by unity in sentences ?
20. How may a sentence be deficient in unity ?
21. What effect on sentences have long or frequent parentheses ?
22. In what other ways may the unity of a sentence be interfered with ?
23. What is meant by strength in sentences ?
24. What effect has the immoderate or injudicious use of adjectives on sentences ?
25. What parts of speech present the greatest difficulty, as to strength, in the construction of sentences ?
26. In what part of a sentence should the most important words be placed ?
27. What may be said of a sentence in this respect ?

28. Which has generally more strength, a period or a loose sentence ?
 29. What is meant by "Antithesis ?"
 30. On what grounds is the use of this figure to be recommended ?
 31. In what cases is it especially effective ?
 32. Into what errors may we fall in applying this figure ?
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33. What is meant by harmony in sentences ?
34. Give the original meaning of the word "Harmony."
35. What character does the English language bear with respect to harmony ?
36. What division may be made of this subject ?
37. Which are the softer, and which the harder final consonants in English ?
38. What differences may be found in the sounds of the same vowel ?
39. What may be said of the liquid letters, in respect of harmony ?
40. What effect on harmony has the place of the accent ?
41. Why are monosyllables to be avoided at the close of a period ?
42. What may be said with respect to rhyming clauses and alliteration ?
43. What forms of words are recommended for agreeable cadences ?
44. What is meant by harmony of proportion ?
45. How does this principle apply to language ?

PART VII.

ON FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.

ON FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.

THERE is in man's nature a principle which strongly urges him to believe that inanimate objects and abstract qualities are endowed with passion and power, and that they can think, feel, and act like human beings. Certain minds, by reason of their temperament, have a stronger tendency to this belief than others ; but all possess it in some degree. It may be observed almost from the cradle, and few men are wholly exempt from its influence through life. When a child talks to her doll, or beats the table against which she has struck herself, this poetical nature is exhibited. The boy, who loves to range alone through woods and rocks, feels this principle still more strongly within him ; and the man, though every year may tend to unpoetise him, and make him more philosophical, can never entirely cast it off.

The expression of this feeling is, in truth, poetry ; and every form of what is called figurative language has its origin in this universal belief. It is worthy of notice that, as the poetical principle is seen to exist

from the very infancy of the child, so it is known to have been most intense and abundant in the earliest ages of the world. The saying that "Man begins by being a poet, and ends by becoming a philosopher," is as true of society collectively as of its members individually ; and though figurative language is not now so common as in ancient times, it still exercises a much more powerful influence on thought than many may imagine. Its proper domain is, of course, poetry ; but poetical figures are also used with great effect in prose language, where they assist in giving clearness, as well as beauty and vivacity, to expression.

In the first place, such language, when well chosen, imparts perspicuity, and makes a deeper impression. Take the following sentence: "When we dip too deeply into pleasure, we always stir a sediment that renders it impure and noxious." The thought is here expressed by a figure of speech. Now, if this sentence were stated in ordinary language,— "When we indulge too freely in pleasure, we are sure to receive injury from the excess,"—the language, though intelligible, would certainly be not so impressive. A child will see the relation between cause and effect as expressed in the former sentence. The language is picturesque, and the commonest understanding will more readily perceive truth in this form ; whereas, in the latter, the expression is less lively, and requires more consideration to comprehend it fully.

Again, figures give elevation and dignity to style. In truth, whenever a writer wishes to impart loftiness to the expression, he always uses figure. In all impassioned appeals, descriptions of the sublime or

beautiful, and in expressions of the nobler passions, he must have recourse to these forms of language to give an adequate representation of his inner thoughts.

The language even of our common and every-day conversation abounds in figure: here, single words are often used figuratively, as when we speak of a country '*flourishing*,' or of any one '*melting*' into tears; of his '*hard*' heart, or of his being '*inflamed*' with rage; of his '*acute*' judgment, &c. All these are common terms, and, indeed, the best we could adopt in such cases, and yet they are all figurative.

This sort of language is divided into two classes; figures of words, and figures of thought. The former are generally called '*tropes*,' from a Greek word signifying 'to turn,' because, in these cases, the word is turned from its original meaning, and used in a new sense. Thus: "To the upright there ariseth *light* in *darkness*." The figure here consists in the words '*light*' and '*darkness*' being used, respectively, for '*comfort*' and '*adversity*.' In the other class, the words are used in their proper and literal meaning, but the figure consists in the turn of thought. All forms of comparison will belong to this class, as they imply a likeness in the *things*, and not in the *symbols* by which they are represented; as, "Why did I not pass away in secret, like the flower of the rock that lifts its fair head unseen, and strews its withered leaves on the blast?" Here there are two conditions compared, but the words are all used in their original and literal sense.

It may be said, perhaps, that this distinction has no practical use, and is not always very clear. But without insisting on artificial distinctions, surely, if there

is a difference, it should be clearly understood, and whenever a well-founded classification can be made, it should be adopted, if only on the general grounds of its giving system and method to our knowledge.

PERSONIFICATION.

We shall now proceed to offer some remarks on those figures of speech which are in most frequent use, and 1st, Personification. By this figure, life, action, and sensibility are bestowed on abstract ideas or inanimate objects. There are two forms of this figure,—1, when an inanimate object or abstract quality is represented in an active state; and 2, when such an object is addressed as if possessing a capacity to listen to us and be affected by our words.

To the first of these classes belong such expressions as the following:—

“Morality and religion forbid war.”—“Justice demands a compensation.”—“The storm raged through the whole night.”—“The billows seem to fear the blast.”—“The thunder hath spent his shafts.”—“Thoughts that wander.”—“The stars hide their diminished heads.”—“The sun impressed his beams.”—“Old ocean smiles.”—“Rich trees wept gums,” &c.

The following are examples of a passive personification, *i. e.*, of inanimate objects addressed. This form is almost exclusively confined to poetry.

“Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,” &c.

“Come, gentle Spring, ethereal mildness, come,” &c.

"Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits," &c.

"Arm, arm, you heavens, against these perjur'd kings!"

"Death, death!—O amiable, lovely death!
Arise from forth the couch of lasting night," &c.

There are two rules for the management of this figure. The first is, never to introduce it unless when the passage requires the expression of strong feeling; and never to continue it when that feeling begins to subside. It is a figure which demands the greatest delicacy of handling, and should be used with judgment and moderation. We may add, that passive personification is better adapted to poetry than to a prose form of composition.

The second rule is that no objects should be personified but such as have in themselves a certain dignity. If extraordinary marks of respect for a person of low condition are ridiculous, so is the personification of an insignificant object. Blair observes, that "to address the corpse of a deceased friend is natural; but to address the clothes he wore, introduces mean and degrading ideas."

APOSTROPHE.

The figure apostrophe very closely resembles a passive personification. The only difference is, that in the former, the writer or poet addresses those who are either dead or absent; whereas, in the latter, an address is made to an abstraction, or to some inanimate object. Apostrophe does not require so violent an effort of the imagination as personification; but it should never be introduced except when the speaker

is supposed to be in some degree under the influence of passion. This figure, also, like personification, is not so frequently met with in prose composition, and is confined chiefly to poetry.

Thus Thomson, in his poem of "Winter," apostrophises the heroes and sages of antiquity :—

"First of your kind, *society divine*,
Still visit thus my nights, for you reserved,
And mount my soaring soul to thoughts like yours."

Shylock, in the "Merchant of Venice," exclaims, —

"O, father *Abraham* ! what these Christians are !"

Lady Constance, in "King John," apostrophises her son :—

"O, lord ! my *boy*, my *Arthur*, my fair *son* !
My life, my joy, my food, my all the world !
My widow-comfort, and my sorrows' cure !"

Lady Macbeth, in her soliloquy, thus addresses her husband :—

"*Glamis* thou art, and *Cawdor* ; and shalt be
What thou art promised," &c.

Sometimes an ideal character is addressed, as in Cowper's "Conversation :"—

"O thwart me not, *Sir Soph*, at every turn,
Nor carp at every flaw you may discern."

So, again, Pope :—

"Presumptuous *man* ! the reason would'st thou find
Why formed so weak, so little, and so blind ?"
"Has God, *thou fool* ! worked solely for thy good,
Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food ?"

HYPERBOLE.

The word "hyperbole" is derived from the Greek *ὑπέρ* (hyper), beyond, and *βάλλω* (ballo), I cast; and the figure consists in magnifying or diminishing an object beyond the reality. This figure is not only found in every form of writing, but is also made use of in common conversation, both by the ignorant and the learned. There is a strong tendency in the human mind not to rest satisfied with things in their real condition, but to describe them as having much more, or much less, of their respective qualities, than they really possess. We are suddenly surprised at the first view of whatever we either greatly admire or strongly condemn; and hence we either paint it in too glowing colours, or speak of it in too violent terms of disparagement.

On examining the hyperbolical expressions used in every-day conversation, it will be found that we have become too much accustomed to this sort of language for it to be considered as extravagant. It is only when there is something striking or unusual in the form of the hyperbole that it now attracts our attention. When people say that they 'regret extremely' such and such things, or that they are 'delighted' to see their friends, or 'infinitely' obliged to them, &c., such expressions are considered as nothing more than the ordinary forms of polite conversation. But when a dramatic poet, describing a lady's grief, says that she —

"Poured forth her tears at such a lavish rate,
That were the world on fire, they might have drowned
The wrath of Heaven, and quenched the mighty ruin."

there is a want of proportion between the cause and the effect that makes the figure degenerate into the ridiculous, and, instead of producing elevation of feeling, has a directly contrary result.

In sanguine temperaments or impulsive natures, this tendency to exaggerate is very common. With such persons, everything is *magnificent! splendid! sublime!! awful!!!* They never condescend to use more ordinary or more moderate terms. They seem always on stilts, raised above common mortals. Sometimes they will carry this feeling so far as to make use — no doubt unconsciously — of contradictory terms, such as, ‘immensely small,’ ‘exquisitely ugly,’ ‘sublime nonsense,’ &c. And such expressions are not confined to their spoken language, but find their way into whatever they may be called upon to write, be it a narrative, letter, or despatch. It is hardly necessary to state that this practice is strongly to be reproved. When we exhaust the superlatives of our language on trivial objects, or common occasions, what is to be done for terms fitted to express the really great or sublime? Besides, even morally speaking, it has a pernicious effect; for when we once contract the habit of indulging in exaggerated language, no one knows how far it may carry us beyond the bounds of truth.

There are two kinds of hyperbole; 1, that suggested by the strong passions of persons describing their own condition; and 2, that used in describing the condition of others. Of these, the first is far preferable, because it is more natural. Violent passion may transport us beyond the bounds of reality in expressing our own state; but one who describes

the feelings of others never can be agitated to such a degree as to use the same forms of extravagant expression. For this reason, there is great beauty in the following passage of Milton :—

“ Me miserable ! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair !
Which way I fly is Hell — myself am Hell —
And in the lowest deep, a lower deep,
Still threatening to devour me, opens wide,
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.”

Here the poet represents Satan as tortured with despair, and no words seem too strong or too extravagant to express the violence of his feelings.

But the passage before quoted, beginning —

“ Poured forth her tears at such a lavish rate,” &c.,

is fairly open to objection. Whatever latitude of expression might be allowed to one suffering from the distracting agitation of grief, the same liberty cannot be conceded to one who describes that condition. The language of passion is naturally more violent than the language of description.

With regard to the application of this figure, there are three rules:—

1. That the mind of the reader should be always prepared for it, and that, consequently, the figure is quite out of place at the beginning of a poem or work ;
2. That it should never be used in the description of any common or familiar subject ; and
3. That it should be comprehended in as few words as possible.

It may be difficult to determine how far this figure may be properly carried; but it is clear that the more words it contains, the less powerful will be the impression. The Spanish-Roman poet Lucan is immoderately fond of hyperbole, and sometimes carries it to an unwarrantable extravagance. In addressing the Roman Emperor Nero, he beseeches him, when deified after death, not to dwell in those parts of the heavens near either of the poles, but to occupy a middle station, lest his weight should overthrow the whole system of the universe.

ON COMPARISON.

To the principle of comparison we are indebted for a considerable amount of our information; for the worth of things can never be so well known and appreciated when they are regarded as isolated, and independent of each other. It is only by bringing things into juxtaposition that we can discover their real value, and can understand the resemblances and differences between them.

Objects of different senses cannot often be properly compared to each other. For this reason, it would be wrong to compare a song to a tree, or the scent of a rose to the softness of velvet. It is plain that we cannot see a sound or hear a taste, though we may compare similar sounds or similar tastes to each other. But it is to be observed, that though two ideas derived from different senses cannot be compared together in a literal signification, they frequently resemble each other in producing similar effects on the mind, and so far as they both contribute to raise

the same train of ideas, they may be legitimately compared to each other. Of a comparison depending on this principle, the following example may be quoted :—

“ The music of Carryl was, like the memory of joys that are past, pleasant and mournful to the soul.”

Here the comparison is founded on the similarity of the effect produced ; for no kind of music bears any immediate resemblance to a mental condition. The following are of the same description :—

“ Delightful is thy presence, O Fingal ! it is like the sun of Cromla, when the hunter mourns his absence for a season, and sees him between the clouds.”

“ Often, like the evening sun, comes the memory of former times on my soul.”

This figure has a twofold object ; either to embellish language, or to assist in explaining the writer's views. The first class of comparisons is more properly adapted to poetry ; but the second, which is more correctly called illustration, is not confined to any form of literature, or any subject of composition. All questions admit of explanation, be they poetical or scientific, and therefore, even in arguing on the most abstruse subjects of philosophy, the figure comparison may be properly introduced. As examples of comparisons of embellishment, the following may be quoted.

Goldsmith, in his description of the village preacher, says :—

“ As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.”

Homer, speaking of the eloquence of Ulysses :—

“Soft as the fleeces of descending snows,
The copious accents fall, with easy art ;
Melting they fall, and sink into the heart !”

Pope's translation.

Milton, describing the standard of the reprobate angels, says that it—

“Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind.”

Shakspeare, in the “Tempest :”—

“And as the morning steals upon the night,
Melting the darkness, so their rising senses
Begin to chase the ignorant fumes that mantle
Their clearer reason.”

Act v. Scene i.

Again, in King John :—

“Why holds thine eye that lamentable rheum,
Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds ?”

Act III. Scene i.

The following are examples of comparisons of illustration, and their purpose is to instruct by explaining :—

“As wax would not be adequate to the purpose of signature, if it had not the power to retain as well as to receive the impression, the same holds of the soul with respect to sense and imagination. Sense is its receptive power ; imagination, its retentive. Had it sense without imagination, it would not be as wax, but as water, where, though all impressions be instantly made, yet, as soon as they are made, they are instantly lost.”

“The *Tartuffes*, however, who were present at the

exhibition, deeply stung by the sarcasms of the poet [Molière], like the foul birds of night whose recesses have been suddenly invaded by a glare of light, raised a fearful cry against him."

"Those persons who creep into the hearts of most people, who are chosen as the companions of their softer hours, and their reliefs from care and anxiety, are never persons of shining qualities or strong virtues. It is like the soft green of the soul on which we rest our eyes that are fatigued with beholding more glaring objects."

There are certain rules to be borne in mind with respect to the use of this figure:—

1. Comparisons should not be drawn between things that are obviously similar to each other. The pleasure derived from comparing lies in discovering a resemblance where we should not, at first, expect to find one. There is no art in showing a likeness which every one could discover for himself, and therefore such comparisons always fall short of their intended effect.

2. We should not fall into the contrary extreme, and found comparisons on resemblances either too faint or too remote. What is not easily perceived can never be very satisfactory, and such comparisons will always be censured by every reader of correct taste.

For this reason, if we cannot invent new comparisons, we should not borrow them. To compare a hero to a lion, benevolence to the sun, or anger to a tempest, raises no emotion in the reader's mind. These figures have been used over and over again, till

they are worn threadbare, and the adoption of them will but proclaim our own want of creative power.

3. The object from which a comparison is drawn should never be one not generally known. The intention of the figure is to throw light on a subject, and this can never be done when the source of a comparison is obscure or abstruse. The figure, when founded on some philosophical discovery or technical term, understood only by a certain class of persons, fails in its effect when introduced in a work intended for the general public.

4. Lastly. A comparison that consists in words only, and not in sense, is open to the strongest objection. This sort of figure may suit the burlesque, or parody, but it should never be admitted into a serious composition. Of this form, the following are specimens :—

“ And now had Phœbus in the lap
Of Thetis taken out his nap,
And, *like a lobster boiled*, the morn
From black to red began to turn.”

Hudibras.

The next is from the same poem :—

“ Great on the bench, great in the saddle,
That could as well bind o’er as swaddle.
Mighty he was at both of these,
And styled of war as well as peace :
So some rats of amphibious nature,
Are either for the land or water.”

Many writers use the terms simile and comparison indiscriminately. This is an error. It is true that they are synonymous ; *i. e.*, they agree in expressing likeness ; but they differ in particulars. In a simile,

the objects compared are brought together, and the likeness between them is merely stated. In a comparison, not only is the likeness expressed, but various points of the resemblance are added; so that the latter figure is more explanatory and more widely expressed than the former. The following is a comparison:—

“As bees

In spring-time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters: they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothèd plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New-rubbed with balm, expatiate, and confer
Their state affairs. So thick the airy crowd
Swarmed and were straitened.”

This is, properly, a comparison. The poet compares the fallen angels to bees; and he carries out the figure into many details:—

“Anon, out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose *like an exhalation*.”

“His look

Drew audience and attention *still as night*,
Or summer's noontide air.”

“He ceased! and Satan stayed not to reply,
But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity, and force renewed,
Springs upward, *like a pyramid of fire*,
Into the wild expanse.”

In the above passages nothing more than the mere likeness is stated. It may be a question whether the simile is not a livelier figure than the comparison, as it leaves more to the imagination, and is

mores suggestive. This distinction between the two figures, though not always maintained, should certainly not be overlooked.

ON METAPHOR.

The next figure to be spoken of is the metaphor. The principle of comparing is the foundation common to the metaphor and the simile. In both cases images are brought together, and their points of resemblance compared. But the difference is, that in the simile the likeness is expressed; whereas in the metaphor it is only implied. For this reason, therefore, the metaphor is generally preferred, as being a more pleasing mode of illustration. The figure is bolder, and more lively, as the mind is here engaged in rapidly comparing the resemblances with the idea expressed; whilst in a comparison the action of the mind is more languid, as we must first fix our attention on the principal object, and then on its corresponding image.

The difference in form between these two figures is, that while in the latter, one object is likened to another, in the former, it is declared to be identical with another. Thus, when a writer says, "He fought like a lion," he uses a simile; but if he should say, "He was a lion in combat," the figure is immediately a metaphor.

This explanation applies strictly to the figure metaphor properly so called; but the word is often used in a looser and more extended sense, and refers to any form of figurative language. For this we can easily account. The metaphor is so much more fre-

quently required than any of the other forms of poetical diction, that the terms 'figurative' and 'metaphorical' have become convertible.

There is a very close analogy between writing and painting, especially on certain subjects. Now, of all the figures of speech, none possesses so much graphic power as the metaphor. It throws a light on description, gives individuality to objects, and makes abstract ideas palpable and visible by imparting to them colour, form, and substance. But to do this well, requires much judgment and delicacy of taste; for in a great variety of ways, the least inaccuracy of expression will spoil the whole imagery. The following rules may be of use to the learner in pointing out the errors into which he is likely to fall by the injudicious use of metaphorical language:—

1. *Metaphors should always be suited to the nature of the subject.* If they are too many, or too lively, or too lofty, we seem to be forcing the subject into a dignity inconsistent with its nature. Neither, on the other hand, should they detract from its proper dignity. In epic or dramatic poetry, some metaphors are admissible which would be wholly out of place in prose. Some, again, are allowable in orations, which would be unsuited to historical or scientific subjects.

It is unnatural to carry on a long process of reasoning by metaphor. In argumentation, we look for perspicuity; in description, for a certain embellishment; and in narrative, for plain and simple language. One of the greatest difficulties in composition is to acquire a power of simplicity of expression. This gives an attractive grace to language, and imparts a charm to it which can be derived from no

other source. In the following extract from Smollett's "History of England," we find an example of inflated metaphor :—

"The bill underwent a great number of alterations and amendments, which were not effected without violent contest: at length, however, it was *float*ed through both Houses of Parliament on the *tid*e of a great majority, and *steer*ed into the safe *harbour* of royal approbation."

"I am glad to hear there are no weightier objections against that reverend *body planted* in this city."

Swift, the writer of the above sentence, professedly rejected all embellishment of language; and whenever, in grave or serious subjects, he is betrayed into metaphor, the figure is generally inconsistent with the tone of thought naturally required in such cases. Here, besides being inappropriate, the figure is also incongruous—*bodies* are never *planted*.

Here is another example :—

"If Fiction and Poetry be brother and sister,—and we need scarcely contest the relationship, though we must allow the sister to possess the finer genius of the two,—it will be quite consistent with Fiction's more forward and mannish ways that he should be readier to answer the harsh question, *Cui bono?*—and of what use are you?—than sweet Poesy herself, who, with all her dignity, is yet retiring. He could not attempt her defence, indeed, with any honour, and certainly could not conduct it with success, unless he remembered her great claim of utility, as he asserts his own. Yet he has his individual character and course, of which it is permitted him to speak, though he must not, and will not, forget his sister's.

If she plants Paradise, he peoples it. If she adorns, and in adorning comforts, the wilderness with a flower, he conducts the traveller through the waste, is with him in his troubles, and guides him where the flowers grow. Sometimes, and in very famous cases, too, brother and sister work jointly, as when Poetry explored Fairy Land. Fiction then was with her; and we have not only the bowers, lustres, and atmospheres of love, but the people and the knights of the Fairy Queen, and the enchanters, too, that troubled her fairy domain. And Fiction, when about works specially his own, seldom attempts anything of importance without his sister's advice. Her breath is his inspiration, and she is as necessary to him as his intimate and inseparable companion—Fact."

2. *Metaphors should never be taken from low or mean objects.* It is offensive to good taste to draw figures from vulgar or nauseous sources. This practice is the more unpardonable, as there is an abundance of materials for metaphorical language. All nature is open to us "where to choose" for this purpose, and offers us an almost infinite variety of objects illustrative of moral or intellectual ideas. Writers, however, have frequently erred in this particular. Tillotson, speaking of the Day of Judgment, describes the world as "cracking about the sinners' ears." "The pretensions to the supernatural," says Coleridge, "*pilloried* by Butler, *sent to Bedlam* by Swift, and, on their reappearance in public, *gibbeted* by Warburton, and *anatomised* by Bishop Lavington, one and all, have this for their essential character, that the spirit is made the universal object of sense or sensation."

A poet describing the footmen's flambeaux after an opera, says : —

“ Now blazed a thousand flaming suns, and bade
Grim Night retire.”

Dryden quotes a poet who imagines winter

“ To *periwig* with snow the bald-pate woods.”

3. Taste and judgment are required to select the most striking images, and show resemblances in points hitherto unobserved. *Metaphors should never be forced*; they should have the appearance of falling naturally into their places, and not of being constrained to do duty for some other and more appropriate word. Neither should they be drawn from recondite or abstruse sources, as such figures will be regarded not only as pedantic, but as impertinent; and, instead of adding grace or beauty to the idea they are intended to elucidate, they will only serve to involve it in obscurity. The most effective metaphors, therefore, are those derived from the common appearances or occurrences in art or nature, and the daily affairs of human life.

Examples of forced Metaphors.

“ A stubborn and unconquerable *flame*
Creeps in his veins, and *drinks* the streams of life.”

4. *Care should be taken that the terms of a metaphor be not incongruous.* The expression, “to eradicate the seeds of vice,” is an instance of this kind of false figure. To ‘eradicate’ means to pull out by the roots, — an action which could not be performed on a

seed. We may say, correctly, to eradicate a vice, or a habit, since we may, figuratively, look upon the one or the other as having taken root in our nature; but since a seed, as such, has no root, the terms 'eradicate' and 'seed' are incongruous, and cannot be used, with reference to each other, in the same figure. And here may be clearly seen the value of a knowledge of derivation. Those who are acquainted with etymology are not likely to bring together incongruous terms. Aware of the original signification of words, they at once perceive that certain terms are incompatible with each other, and thus more easily avoid the inelegance and incorrectness arising from ignorance of this branch of the study of language.

The following are examples of incongruous or inconsistent metaphors:—

"Instead of losing myself and readers in a wide *field*, I shall simply count the steps of the *ladder* that has conducted us to the existing *platform*, upon which it must be the pride and pleasure of every one to contemplate the life around him."

"Time's *effacing* fingers cannot *erase* these interests."

Lord Ellesmere, in the "History of the two Sieges of Vienna," speaking of Sobieski, says, "He flung his powerful *frame* into the *saddle*, and his great *soul* into the *cause*."

Robert Boyle, the celebrated chemist, was described as "the *father* of chemistry, and the *brother* of the Earl of Cork."

One of Lord Castlereagh's speeches in Parliament has this passage: "And now, sir, I must *embark* on the *feature* on which this subject *hinges*."

5. *Metaphors taken from different objects should*

never be used in the same sentence. This error, an excess of the last-mentioned fault, is one of the grossest abuses of the figure. If it be wrong to use incompatible terms in a single figure, it is much more so to mix metaphors together. For example:—

“Though, in their corrupt notions of divine worship, they are apt to multiply their gods, yet their earthly devotion is seldom paid to above one idol at a time, whose oar they pull with less murmuring and more skill than when they share the lading, or even hold the helm.”

Here the metaphor is ridiculously inconsistent. The demagogue is first an idol, and then a boat—two totally distinct ideas. There is no natural connection whatever between worshipping and rowing; and “to pull the oar of an idol” is a palpable absurdity.

“I bridle in my struggling Muse with pain
That longs to launch into a bolder strain.”

Dr. Johnson, in his “Life of Addison,” criticising these lines, says: “To bridle a goddess is no very delicate idea. But why must she be bridled?—because she longs to launch—an act which was never hindered by a bridle; and whither would she launch?—into a nobler strain. In the first line she is a horse; in the second, a boat; and the care of the poet is to keep his horse or his boat from singing.”

“Women were formed to temper mankind, not to set an edge upon their minds, and blow up in them those passions which are apt to rise of their own accord.”

There is no analogy between ‘setting an edge’ and ‘blowing up.’

Even when kept distinct from each other, it is not advisable to use different metaphors in the same period. The sudden change of scene distracts the attention, and the several images conveys but a faint impression to the mind.

6. *A sentence should never have metaphorical and proper expressions so mixed up together, that one part of it be taken literally and the other figuratively.*

"When thus, as I may say, before the use of the loadstone or knowledge of the compass, I was sailing in a vast ocean, without other help than the pole-star of the ancients, and the rules of the French stage among moderns."

The fault here lies in the figurative use of the word 'pole-star,' joined to the literal meaning of the 'rules of the French stage.'

ON FIGURES CONNECTED WITH THE METAPHOR.

The peculiar boldness of the figure metaphor makes it at least as intimately connected with the style, as with the thoughts of a writer. For as it is not an explicit comparison, and the name of one thing is put forward for the name of another, quite different though resembling it in some quality, there is, consequently, an apparent or real impropriety, and some degree of obscurity, in the use of this figure. The same remark applies to certain tropes closely connected with the metaphor, viz., synecdoché, metonymy, antonomasia, and irony. These all imply the substitution of one thing for another, but in different relations.

In *synecdoché*, the relation is between a part and the whole, or between the material and the thing

made; as when we say, He earns his *bread* (a part of his food); The *canvas* glows; The *marble* speaks (the material for the thing made).

In *metonymy*, the relation is between cause and effect (or *vice versâ*); the container for the thing contained, or the sign for the thing signified; as, *Gray hairs* should be respected (effect for cause); I am reading *Macaulay* (cause for effect); The *country* was distracted (for inhabitants); He assumed the *crown* (sign of power, for power).

Antonomasia is where the individual is put for the species; as, Every man is not a *Solomon* (for the species wise); Do you take me for a *Cræsus*? (rich).

In *irony*, the relation between the thing said and the thing meant is contrariety; as when we speak of the 'sweet disposition' of one who is notoriously ill-tempered, or of 'beautiful weather' when it is raining in torrents. This figure is most frequently used in satire.

It should be observed that of two synonymous words, one may be often figuratively used in a case where it would be wholly unwarrantable to employ the other. Take the two words 'vein' and 'artery.' Now, we may say, metaphorically, 'a vein of satire,' but we could not say 'an artery of satire.' Again, 'high' and 'tall' are synonymous; but though we may speak of 'high aspirations,' we could not here substitute 'tall' for 'high.'

In all languages we meet with words which have lost their original concrete meaning, and are now used only in a secondary sense. Such are, in English, the words 'asperse,' 'obviate,' 'eradicate' &c. We may neither 'obviate' a friend, nor 'asperse' him with mud,

nor 'eradicate' one of the plants in his garden. This language, though intelligible to a linguist, would be condemned by every man of common sense as pedantic and affected. Such words, in whatever view they may be held by the etymologist, cannot now be considered as metaphorical. They produce nothing of the effect of the metaphor; but simply suggest to the reader's mind, without the intervention of any image, the ideas which the writer intends to convey.

The figures synecdoché, metonymy, and antonomasia, may, in various instances, very materially contribute to vivacity of style :—

1st. Where a species is represented by an individual; as, "It is not every poet that can expect to find a *Mecænas*." Here, by antonomasia, a proper name is made to represent the whole class *patron*. In the same way, *Judas* is sometimes used for a traitor, *Homer* for a poet, &c.

By one form of the synecdoché, the species is put for the genus; as when an assassin is called a *cut-throat*; a fiction, a *lie*; a thief, a *cut-purse*, &c.

Another is where a verb is formed from a proper name, to express some act for which the person who held that name was notorious. Thus, Hamlet says he had seen some actors "*out-herod* Herod." On a similar principle was formed the verb 'to burke,' derived from a notorious murderer of that name. The verb 'to macadamize,' from McAdam, a celebrated road-maker, belongs to the same class. This figure, however, belongs rather to the burlesque, and is scarcely admissible in writings of a more serious cast.

2nd. Where the writer wishes to draw attention to some particular part of the subject which is most interesting. This is similar to the last-explained case, where an individual stood for a species, and a species for a genus. Here, a part represents the whole; the abstract suggests the concrete; the passion, its object; the instrument, its agent, &c. For example, when it is said, "All *hands* were called to the pumps," or "This manufacturer employs more than one hundred *hands*," &c., the part is used for the whole, as this particular part (the hand) is required in such cases. By a similar figure, we commonly say, "A fleet of twenty *sail*;" "So many *head* of cattle," &c.

In a similar way, the abstract may represent the concrete, or *vice versâ*. We speak of an assemblage of "*youth and beauty*," meaning young and beautiful persons; "Miss Prim," for one of precise manners; "Master Impudence," &c. "Two *heads* are better than one." "No *tongue*, all *eyes*!"

So, again, the passion is put for the object. A mother will call her child her "*love*;" a tyrannical ruler is called the "*terror*" of his subjects; joy, hope, detestation, &c., are frequently used in the same way.

Lastly, by a similar process, the instrument is frequently put for the agent. A skilful literary man is called a good *pen*; so many hundred *horse* (for horsemen); a thousand *lances* (for soldiers).

A particular liveliness of expression is produced, when, in using figurative language, abstract ideas are represented by objects of sense. The imagination is more strongly affected by outward things than by abstractions. If, then, the writer be treating of

things conceivable, it will much contribute to enliven his style, that the figures he may think proper to introduce be drawn from the material world.

There is a certain degree of vivacity in every metaphor, even where the literal and the figurative meaning of the word belong to the same class of objects. Thus, a *blunder* has been called an *anomaly*, both words belonging to the class of abstraction. Again, the words *step* and *measure* are employed for each other metaphorically, and are both originally concrete terms. But there is a particular vivacity when sensible objects are used to represent abstract ideas; there is here a picturesque effect which is not found in the other cases. When the poet speaks of a *torrent* of vice, for the influence of evil manners, the single word forms a lively picture in the mind, and is particularly gratifying to the imagination. By the same kind of metaphor, *light* is used for knowledge; a *bridle* for restraint, &c. *Burning* zeal, *inflamed* with anger, a *rooted* prejudice, &c., may be traced to the same principle.

Vivacity may also be produced when, in adopting figurative expressions, animate rather than inanimate objects are presented to view. The imagination has more sympathy with sentient creatures than with inert matter, and consequently, beings awaken in us more attention than things without life. This may probably be the reason why the term *vivacity* is applied to such a style, as the word itself implies life, vigour, and energy.

According to this principle, a literary work is frequently called the *offspring* of the brain; and the

early period of a nation's existence is termed its *infancy*, or *childhood*, &c.

But when sense, feeling, and affection are ascribed metaphorically to inanimate objects, the energy of the style is still more increased. Thomson, describing the effect of the sun on snow, says :—

“ Perhaps the vale
Relents awhile to the reflected ray.”

The great beauty, as well as power, of this passage lies in the word *relents*, which makes the whole scene instinct with life and feeling. By the same form of metaphor, we commonly say, a *happy* life, a *learned* age, a *melancholy* disaster, &c.

The same purpose may be answered by metonymy. 1st. Where the inventor is put for the invention : for instance, Ceres for bread ; Bacchus for wine ; Mars for war ; Neptune for the sea, &c. This figure, however, though frequently adopted by the classical writers of antiquity, is seldom introduced by the moderns.

Another class of metonymies is where animate are used for inanimate things, the concrete for the abstract ; as, *the fool*, for folly ; *the knave*, for knavery ; *the philosopher*, for philosophy, &c. ; as, “ He durst not speak ; but wisely kept *the fool* within.” “ Craterus loves *the king* (i. e., the kingly office) ; but Hæphestion loves Alexander.” So Swift, “ I hate *the viceroy*, love the man.” “ Brutus was attached to *the man* (Cæsar), but detested *the tyrant*” (his tyranny). “ There spoke all *the father*” (i. e., fatherly feeling), &c. Of the whole of this class of figures it may be said that as a metaphor may be termed an allegory in epitome, so those

metaphors and metonymies which present us with animate for inanimate objects are personifications in miniature.

ON ALLUSION.

The figure of speech called Allusion is that by which some well-known fact in history, or the sayings or opinions of some eminent writer, are recalled to mind. It will, doubtless, require very extensive learning to understand all the allusions we may meet with in the course of our reading; but the young student should never allow an obscure allusion to pass, without noting it down for inquiry. The following are examples of this figure :—

“When you see the people of this republic [Athens] banishing and murdering their best and ablest citizens, dissipating the public treasure with the most senseless extravagance, and spending their whole time as spectators or actors, in playing, fiddling, dancing, or singing, does it not, my Lord, strike your imagination with the image of a complex Nero?”—*Burke*.

The next example is from the same author. Lamenting the public calamities, and inveighing against the violent spirit of innovation then prevalent, he says :—

“Novelty is not the only source of zeal. Why should not a Maccabeus and his brethren arise to assert the honour of the ancient laws, and to defend the temple of their forefathers, with as ardent a spirit as can inspire any innovator to destroy the monuments of the piety and the glory of ancient ages?”

“The case of Tantalus, in the region of poetic punishment, was somewhat to be pitied, because the

fruits that hung about him retired from his hand ; but what tenderness can be claimed by those who, though perhaps they suffer the pains of Tantalus, will never lift their hands for their own relief ?"—*Johnson*.

"When a king asked Euclid, the mathematician, whether he could not explain his art to him in a more compendious manner, he was answered, that there was no royal road to geometry !"—*Ibid*.

ON CLIMAX.

Climax, or Amplification, as it is called by Quintilian, consists in arranging the circumstances of some description, object, or action, in such an order that they become more and more magnified as we proceed, till the idea is raised to the highest. The principle of this figure is similar to the one on which is built the rule for arranging arguments in a composition ; viz., that they should be placed so as to continually increase in power. For, as arguments thus arranged are likely to produce a stronger conviction of truth, so, a climax, when judiciously managed, gradually unfolds the image to the mind, and thus more effectually gratifies the imagination. For example:—

"For eighteen months, without intermission, this destruction raged from the gates of Madras to the gates of Tanjore ; and so completely did these masters in their art, Hyder Ali and his ferocious son, absolve themselves of their impious vow, that, when the British armies traversed, as they did, the Carnatic for hundreds of miles in all directions, through the whole line of their march, they did not see one man, not one woman, not one child, not one four-footed

beast of any description whatever. One dead, uniform silence reigned over the whole region!"—*Burke*.

"A man of polite imagination is let into a great many pleasures that the vulgar are not capable of receiving. He can converse with a picture, and find an agreeable companion in a statue. He meets with a secret refreshment in a description, and often feels a greater satisfaction in the prospect of fields and meadows, than another does in the possession. It gives him, indeed, a kind of property in everything he sees, and makes the most rude, uncultivated parts of nature administer to his pleasures; so that he looks upon the whole world, as it were, in another light, and discovers in it a multitude of charms that conceal themselves from the generality of mankind."—*Addison*.

In the whole range of English literature, there is, perhaps, none more strikingly illustrative of the figure climax than this passage. Many in reading it may probably feel a secret pleasure in its beauty for which they cannot wholly account. The leading cause of this charm consists in the management of the climax. The writer having laid down his position, proceeds to illustrate it by reference, firstly, to single objects—a 'picture' and a 'statue;' secondly, he goes on to 'fields' and 'meadows;' then the view is expanded to the 'rude, uncultivated parts of nature;' and, lastly, the 'whole world' is brought before the reader's imagination.

The following description, from Thomson's "Seasons," may also be quoted as a beautiful example of this figure:—

"'Tis listening fear, and dumb amazement all,
When to the startled eye, the sudden glance

Appears far south, eruptive through the cloud ;
 And, following slower, in explosion vast,
 The thunder raises his tremendous voice.
 At first, heard solemn o'er the verge of heaven,
 The tempest growls ; but, as it nearer comes,
 And rolls its awful burden on the wind,
 The lightnings flash a larger curve, and more
 The noise astounds ; till, overhead, a sheet
 Of livid flame discloses wide ; then shuts
 And opens wider ; shuts and opens still
 Expansive, wrapping ether in a blaze :
 Follows the loosened, aggravated roar,
 Enlarging, deepening, mingling ; peal on peal
 Crushed horrible, convulsing heaven and earth."

Other examples of climax : —

"Since concord was lost, friendship was lost ; fidelity was lost ; liberty was lost ; — all was lost !"

"The display of this day has reflected the highest honour on himself, lustre upon letters, renown upon parliament, glory upon the country."

"It is pleasant to be virtuous and good, because that is to excel many others ; it is pleasant to grow better, because that is to excel ourselves ; it is pleasant to mortify and subdue our lusts, because that is victory ; it is pleasant to command our appetites and passions, and to keep them in due order within the bounds of reason and religion, because that is empire !"

ANTI-CLIMAX.

Bathos, or Anti-climax, is the converse of the last-named figure. Here, the expression, instead of growing stronger as the poet proceeds, takes a contrary direc-

tion, and continually descends. When used seriously, bathos adds great force to description ; for example :—

“What must the King do now ? Must he submit ?
 The King shall do it. Must he be deposed ?
 The King shall be contented. Must he lose
 The name of King ? o’ God’s name let it go.
 I’ll give my jewels for a set of beads ;
 My gorgeous palace, for a hermitage ;
 My gay apparel, for an alms-man’s gown ;
 My figured goblets, for a dish of wood ;
 My sceptre, for a palmer’s walking-staff ;
 My subjects, for a pair of carved saints ;
 And my large kingdom for a little grave ;
 A little, little grave, an obscure grave.”

SHAKSPERE, *Richard II.* Act III. Scene iii.

ON ALLEGORY.

In the widest sense of the word, whenever one thing is said or expressed, and another signification is implied, the story is allegorical. A painting representing the Hours (personified) harnessing the horses to the chariot of the Sun, would be an allegory ; that is, the representation would signify something more than what was painted. Swift’s “Tale of a Tub” is allegorical ; it is a satire on the sections of Christianity, disguised under the story of the adventures of three brothers. “The Pilgrim’s Progress” is, perhaps, the longest allegory ever written ; it represents the trials and struggles of a Christian in his journey through life, embodied in the adventures of an individual personage. “Gulliver’s Travels” is another celebrated allegory, in which political parties and intrigues are satirised.

Fables and parables partake of the nature of this figure. They are short stories—not strictly true—but inculcating some moral principle or religious doctrine.

The following extract from Aikin's "Miscellanies" is an example of the allegory:—

"In that season of the year, when the serenity of the sky, the various fruits which cover the ground, the discoloured foliage of the leaves, and all the sweet but fading graces of inspiring autumn, open the mind to benevolence and dispose it for contemplation, I was wandering in a beautiful and romantic country, till curiosity began to give way to weariness; and I sat me down on a fragment of a wall overgrown with moss, where the rustling of the falling leaves, the dashing of waters, and the hum of the distant city, soothed my mind into the most perfect tranquillity, and sleep insensibly stole upon me as I was indulging the agreeable reveries which the objects around me naturally inspired.

"I immediately found myself in a vast extended plain, in the middle of which arose a mountain, higher than I had before any conception of. It was covered with a multitude of people, chiefly youths; many of whom pressed forwards with the liveliest expressions of ardour in their countenance, though the way was in many places steep and difficult. I observed that those who had just begun to climb the hill thought themselves not far from the top; but as they proceeded, new hills were continually rising to their view, and the summit of the highest they could before discern seemed but the foot of another, till the mountain at length appeared to lose itself in the clouds. As I

was gazing on these things with astonishment, my good genius suddenly appeared : 'The mountain before thee,' said he, 'is the Hill of Science. On the top is the temple of Truth, whose head is above the clouds, and a veil of pure light covers her face. Observe the progress of her votaries; be silent and attentive.'

"I saw that the only approach to the mountain was by a gate, called the gate of languages. It was kept by a woman of a pensive and thoughtful appearance, whose lips were continually moving, as though she repeated something to herself. Her name was Memory. On entering this first enclosure, I was stunned with a confused murmur of jarring voices and dissonant sounds, which increased upon me to such a degree that I was utterly confounded, and could compare the noise to nothing but the confusion of tongues at Babel.

"After contemplating these things, I turned my eyes towards the top of the mountain, where the air was always pure and exhilarating, the path shaded with laurels and other evergreens, and the effulgence which beamed from the face of the goddess seemed to shed a glory round her votaries. 'Happy,' said I, 'are they who are permitted to ascend the mountain!' —but while I was pronouncing this exclamation with uncommon ardour, I saw standing beside me a form of diviner features, and a more benign radiance. 'Happier,' said she, 'are those whom Virtue conducts to the mansions of content!' 'What!' said I, 'does Virtue, then, reside in the vale?' 'I am found,' said she, 'in the vale, and I illuminate the mountain. I cheer the cottager at his toil, and inspire the sage at his

meditation. I mingle in the crowd of cities, and bless the hermit in his cell. I have a temple in every heart that owns my influence; and to him that wishes for me, I am already present. Science may raise you to eminence; but I, alone, can guide you to felicity!’ While the goddess was thus speaking, I stretched out my arms towards her with a vehemence which broke my slumbers. The chill dews were falling round me, and the shades of evening stretched over the landscape. I hastened homeward, and resigned the night to silence and meditation.”

The following fable of Lessing’s is another specimen of an allegory: —

“The valiant Wolf.”

“‘My father, of glorious memory,’ said a young wolf to a fox, ‘was a perfect hero! What a terror he made himself to the whole neighbourhood! He triumphed successively over more than two hundred enemies, and sent their wicked souls to the kingdom of perdition. No wonder, then, that at last, he himself should be conquered by one.’

‘That is just the way a funeral orator would speak over a corpse,’ said the fox; ‘but the veracious historian would add: — “These two hundred enemies over whom he triumphed were sheep and asses; and the one enemy by whom he was slain was the first bullock he dared to encounter.”’”

Allegory may be occasionally introduced with very great effect in a moral essay. Dr. Johnson, in many of his essays, adopts a particular form of this figure.

He invents a name to indicate a certain character : "Aliger" for one of fickle or capricious temper ; "Avarus" for a miser ; "Gelidus" for a man of phlegmatic disposition, &c., and then gives a brief description of the habits or peculiarities of this imaginary personage. For example : —

"Eriphile¹ has employed her eloquence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of servants, the nastiness of her house, the ruin of her furniture, the difficulty of preserving tapestry from the moths, and the carelessness of the sluts whom she employs in brushing it. It is her business every morning to visit the rooms in hopes of finding a chair without its cover, a window shut or open contrary to her orders, a spot on the hearth, or a feather on the floor, that the rest of the day may be justifiably spent in taunts of contempt, or vociferations of anger. She lives for no other purpose but to preserve the neatness of a house and gardens, and feels neither inclination to pleasure, nor aspiration after virtue, while she is engrossed by the great employment of keeping gravel from grass, and wainscot from dust. Of three amiable nieces, she has declared herself an irreconcilable enemy to one, because she broke off a tulip with her hoop ; to another, because she spilt her coffee on a Turkey carpet ; and to the third, because she let a wet dog run into the parlour. She has broken off her intercourse of visits, because company makes a house dirty ; and resolves to confine herself more to her own affairs, and to live no longer in mire by foolish lenity."

¹ A lover of strife.

Exercises in figurative Language.

The forms of the following sentences are to be changed by the learner; a figure of speech being substituted for some given expression. The words in parentheses are intended as suggestions.

1. At twelve o'clock at night, when all was silent, we were awakened from sleep by an explosion of artillery (dead, voice).
2. To prevent injury, it was ordered that all heretics should quit the city immediately (contaminate, pollution).
3. The wonderful eloquence of the orator so excited the patriotism of the people, that they rose to a man in rebellion (kindle, spark, burst, flame).
4. The whole transaction was so disgraceful and dishonourable, that it were well could his name be no more heard (stain, blot, page).
5. The monks of the middle ages preserved much of the knowledge of antiquity (light, glimmer, distant ages).
6. After inflicting this terrible injury on the enemy, the general again proposed to negotiate a peace (blow, olive-branch).
7. The chief, finding all remonstrances vain, at length unwillingly signed the treaty (heavy heart).
8. Though the poor man used every exertion to maintain his family, he was always in difficulties; and he now daily grew more and more straitened in circumstances (struggle, fortune, overtake, poverty).

9. Nothing could surpass his persuasive eloquence ; he had but to speak the word, and all were at once ready to take up arms in his cause (honey, flow, lips ; swords, leap, scabbards).
10. This decree of the Emperor took the whole city by surprise ; and none of the inhabitants dared to resist it (thunderbolt, lift voice).
11. The beautiful vessel, with all sails spread, passed us rapidly, and was soon out of sight (wings, fade, view).
12. News is just arrived of the loss of this vessel ; she is supposed to have sprung a leak and gone down : all on board perished (victim, watery grave).
13. By these judicious measures, the discontent of the people was at length put a stop to ; and the whole country was again peaceful (spirit, expire, reign).
14. The persevering labours of the missionaries at length succeeded :—Christianity was, eventually, firmly established among the natives (crown, triumph, cross).
15. Let us turn from these sad records of national disgrace, to recount more honourable transactions (brighter page).
16. Notwithstanding all my entreaties, I could not persuade him to attend to my remonstrances, and he obstinately persisted in his previously-formed scheme (lend ear ; follow path).
17. This subject is of so speculative a nature, that it is by no means easy to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion upon it (wide field).
18. The city was crowded with people from all parts

of the country, who had come to be present at the coronation (swarm).

19. In his travels through Asia Minor, he discovered several Greek manuscripts on philosophical subjects (rescue, oblivion).
20. His joy was so extravagant, that he scarcely knew what he was doing; he sang, danced, and capered about like one possessed (intoxicate).
21. His industry and perseverance enabled him to overcome difficulties which would have stopped the progress of ordinary men (surmount, barriers, daunt).
22. This revolution was of a nature to interrupt the relations of society, and destroy all human sympathies (shock fabric, loosen bonds).
23. New hordes of barbarians continually invaded the empire; and no sooner was one tribe settled in a province, than it was succeeded by another (inundate, wave, barbarism).
24. He pronounced a funeral oration over the corpse of the hero, in which the virtues and talents of the illustrious dead were celebrated with the highest praises (glowing strains).
25. Justly fearing the anger of his fellow-citizens, he took every means to pacify their indignation (divert storm).
26. Foreseeing the approach of danger, he made all the preparations against it which the crisis required (storm).
27. The Arabs had for some time coveted the possession of Spain, and eagerly seized this opportunity of getting a footing in that country (longing eyes).

28. Being thrown into the thickest of the crowd, he found it impossible to extricate himself from the mass of human beings by whom he was surrounded (hurried along, tide).
29. Wherever he came, the poet found that his fame had preceded him, and he was received with the greatest honours in every city through which he passed (fame, trumpet, laurels).
30. The castle stood on a lofty rock, close to the shores of a beautiful Swiss lake (washed, waters).
31. Harassed by grief and vexation, the unfortunate prelate was seized with a fever, of which he died after an illness of six weeks (prey, carried off).
32. The principle of imitation is innate in man ; he feels its influence, and unconsciously puts it in practice from infancy to old age (cradle, grave, sway).
33. This misfortune put an end to all his hopes ; he fell ill, and never again recovered his strength (blow, held up, head).
34. It was a consolation to his friends to find that after so many toils and dangers, he should at length enjoy the results of his devotion to the cause (reap fruits).
35. The people rose in rebellion against this intolerable despotism, and regained their liberty (burst bonds, shackles, &c.).
36. His affairs were so extensive and complicated, that any unforeseen obstruction, even in a matter of minor importance, immediately threw the whole into inextricable confusion (machine, irregularity, smaller wheels).

37. He took the greatest possible care that his designs should not be made known (shroud, veil).
38. Religion has the power of alleviating the misfortunes of life, and imparting cheerfulness to old age (disperse clouds ; sunshine, evening).
39. Those who have a taste for the scenery of Nature may find instruction and amusement in every object (Nature speaks).
40. Thus enjoying the highest favour of his sovereign, Cortés might now be regarded as offering an enviable alliance for the best houses in Castile (bask, sunshine).
41. He determined to return to America, where a new opportunity was offered to him for honourable enterprise (field opened).
42. The career of many conquerors has been marked by cruelty (path, stain, blood).
43. The injuries done in the preceding year were now repaired, and there was now no longer any evidence of the late war (hand, war, swept).
44. The attack, which had been so long in preparation, was at length made on the capital (tempest, muster, fury).

Exercise 2.

The pupil is to re-write the following sentences ; in each case changing the figures of speech into common language.

1. God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, and fits the back to the burden.
2. Hope darts a ray of light through the thickest gloom.

3. Patience and resignation are the pillars of human peace on earth.
4. A man should make the sphere of his innocent pleasures as wide as possible.
5. Sloth saps the foundation of every virtue, and pours upon us a deluge of crimes and evils.
6. Anxiety is the poison of human life ; it is the parent of many sins, and of more miseries.
7. The field of hope appears to stretch wide before the young.
8. Who but must drop a tear over human nature when he beholds that morning which arose so bright, overcast with such untimely darkness !
9. The ground thirsts for rain.
10. Roses without thorns are the growth of Paradise alone.
11. The earth smiles with plenty.
12. The warrior's laurels are dyed in blood, and bedewed with the tears of the widow and the orphan.
13. While some sail o'er the tranquil surface of the unruffled lake of life, others have to steer through a troubled and stormy ocean.
14. If the spring of life put forth no blossoms, in summer there will be no beauty, and in autumn, no fruit.
15. The fumes which arise from a heart boiling with violent passions, never fail to darken the understanding.
16. The path of piety and virtue, pursued with a firm and constant spirit, will assuredly lead to happiness.
17. The tear of repentance brings its own relief.
18. Year after year steals something from us, till the

decaying fabric totter of itself, and crumble at length into dust.

19. Everything that we here enjoy, changes, decays, and comes to an end. All floats on the surface of that river which, with a swift current, is running towards a boundless ocean.
20. The vessel which had been so long the sport of the winds, was at length buried in the deep.
21. The fountains of heaven are opened ; the sky frowns darkly, and the thunder raises his tremendous voice.
22. The splendour of his genius illumines every object on which it shines.
23. The pulse of freedom throbs through every vein of the British Empire.
24. "The moon unveiled her peerless light, and o'er the dark her silver mantle threw."
25. The hand of industry had, in a few years, entirely changed the face of the country.
26. Hope illumines our path through life, and, as the night grows darker, emits a brighter ray.
27. Better that men should die bravely with their arms in their hands, than that they should slide into the bloodless but dishonourable grave which slavery opens for her vassals.
28. The tongue is a little member ; but it causes much strife.
29. He who hastens too speedily to reputation, often decks himself in colours which quickly fade, or in plumes which accident may shake off, or competition pluck away.
30. He that neglects the culture of ground naturally fertile, is more shamefully culpable than he

whose field would scarcely recompense his husbandry.

31. The British Constitution stands among the nations of the earth like an ancient oak in the forest; which, after having survived many a blast, overtops its companions and commands their respect and veneration.
32. The zephyrs, borne from the golden East, proclaimed the approach of morn with balmy gales.
33. I heard the voice of the waters as they merrily danced from rock to rock.
34. The earliest history of ancient nations is shrouded in impenetrable darkness.
35. The voice of grief pierces through the clamour of exulting joys.
36. He paid the last debt to Nature.
37. The press teemed with tributes in verse and prose to the memory of the deceased.
38. In all the miry paths of life which he had trodden, no speck ever sullied the robe of his modest and graceful muse.
39. A nature so dependent on others for the sunshine of existence does not flower if deprived of the atmosphere of home.
40. A gleam of sunshine broke through the gloom that was gathering over the poet.
41. He launched into a sea of social dissipation.
42. When a poet's fame is increased by time, it is then too late to investigate the peculiarities of his disposition; the dews of the morning are past, and we vainly try to continue the chase by the meridian splendour.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS ON PART VII.

1. What is the origin of figurative language ?
2. To what purposes may it be applied ?
3. What distinction is made between figures of words and figures of thought ?
4. Describe the figure "Personification."
5. Explain the difference between active and passive personification.
6. What rules are laid down for the management of this figure ?
7. What is meant by "Apostrophe ?"
8. In what cases may this figure be used ?
9. What is "Hyperbole ?"
10. To what principle is this figure referred ?
11. How may it be abused ?
12. Under what circumstances is hyperbole admissible ?
13. How many classes of hyperbole are there ? and which is the preferable ?
14. What rules are to be observed in the application of this figure ?
15. What is "Comparison ?"
16. For what purposes is comparison used ?
17. Which class of comparison is properly adapted to poetry ?
18. State some of the rules concerning the use of this figure.
19. What is the difference between a simile and a comparison ?
20. Give examples of both figures.
21. Explain the figure "Metaphor."
22. For what special purposes is the metaphor used ?
23. Give the substance of the first rule on the use of metaphor.
24. Are metaphors admissible in a long process of reasoning ?
25. What does Rule 2 say on this subject ?
26. Give some examples of incongruous or inconsistent metaphors.
27. Explain the meaning of the figure "Synecdoché."
28. What is meant by "Metonymy ?"

29. Show how the application of these figures may increase vivacity of style.
30. What is meant by the figure "Allusion?"
31. Describe the figure "Climax."
32. What is the object of this figure?
33. Explain the meaning of the word "Allegory."
34. Give some examples of this figure.
35. Show how fables and parables are allegories.
36. How does Johnson use this figure?

PART VIII.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

OUR knowledge of the origin and affinities of European languages has been, within the last forty or fifty years, greatly increased and improved by the labours of German scholars. The similarity in form of many words belonging to apparently different families of languages, was too striking to have escaped the observation of writers on philology. But it was not till the attention of Grimm, Lassen, Bopp, Müller, and others, had been directed towards it, that we possessed any systematic knowledge of this interesting subject ; and the result of their investigations is now before us. Without entering into details which would be out of place, the conclusions arrived at by these eminent scholars may be here briefly stated.

It is the opinion of the above-named philologists that all the languages of Europe are derived from one grand source, viz. the *ARIAN*, or, as it is generally termed, the *Indo-European* ; a name which denotes its connection with India and Europe. That to this stem belong the ancient Sanscrit, and all the later dialects

of India and Persia; and that to the same source may be traced the Celtic, Teutonic, Italic, Hellenic, and Slavonic languages. It is supposed that, at a date anterior to any historical record, a migration of these Arians towards the West took place. These tribes were called Kelts (or Celts), and they settled in the three most western countries of Europe; viz. those afterwards called Spain, Gaul, and Britain. The Kelts were pressed onwards towards the west by another tribe of Arians—the Teutōnes. The dialects of Scandinavia, Flemish, Dutch, and modern German, belong to this second migration. The languages of eastern Europe, viz. the Lithuanian, Old Prussian, and Lettish, Russian, Polish, and Bohemian, are the branches of a third migration from the same original stem, and are known as the Slavonic or Wendic family. There is, also, no doubt that the two earliest civilised languages of Europe, viz. Greek and Latin, were both originally derived from the same source.

Turning from this general survey of the earliest languages of both civilised and barbarous Europe, we shall now direct our attention to the one with which we are naturally most interested—English.

In order to become thoroughly acquainted with the language of any country, we must not only understand its present condition, but must be able to trace it through all the phases of its history, that we may learn what circumstances either of external attack, or internal social disturbance, may have contributed to its modifications or changes; or what trials it may have undergone before it appeared in its present condition. Of the language of the ancient Britons, as they were found by Cæsar, we know little or nothing; but it is

fair to conclude that the long dominion exercised over them by the Romans was not very favourable to its development or improvement. The language of an oppressed people can never flourish : without cultivation of mind there can be no advancement in mental expression, and the condition of the one is a certain criterion of the condition of the other. The Romans left many and lasting traces of their rule in this country, and the English language, even at the present moment, is not wholly without signs of their former dominion in Britain.

This is shown particularly in the names of places. It is commonly known that the termination 'caster,' or 'cester,' as in Lancaster, Gloucester, Chester, &c., points out the sites of ancient Roman encampments. Again, the form 'coln,' as in Lincoln, Calne, Colnbrook, &c., is derived from the Latin 'colonia,' and marks the ancient agricultural stations of the Romans. According to some writers also, the word 'street' was left to the Britons by their Roman conquerors, they having been the first to make '*strata viarum*,' or military roads, throughout the country. But these, and perhaps a few more words, form but a very small contribution to our present language, and can have no sensible effect on its general character.

Remains of the ancient British may still be found in various names of places scattered throughout the island ; such as 'Kent,' 'Thames,' &c. Some few other Celtic words, have found a place in modern English ; as *bard*, *kilt*, *clan*, *pibroch*, *plaid*, &c. But even at the highest computation, Celtic forms a very minute portion of the present English language.

The remains of the Celtic language, which, at one

time, was spread over all the western countries of Europe, are now comparatively scanty. They are found, 1. in Wales, where there is still a Celtic population retaining its original language. 2. In the Isle of Man, where it is called the Manx. 3. In the Cornish, or dialect of the common people of Cornwall. 4. In the Highlands of Scotland, where the language is termed Gaelic. 5. In the Erse, or language of the lower orders of Ireland; and 6. in the "Bas Breton," or common speech of the peasants and fishermen of Bretagne.

On the withdrawal of the Roman legions from Britain in the 5th century, a violent revolution took place both in the political condition, and in the language, of the country. It is a matter of history that the Saxons were invited to repel the northern tribes that had invaded the southern part of the island — that they successfully drove back those fierce invaders — that they treacherously turned their arms against their own allies, and eventually driving them into the corners of the island, or beyond sea, they established themselves throughout the length and breadth of the country. In both people and language, there was now no amalgamation, no modification; but the substitution of one for another; Saxons for Britons, Teutonic for Celtic.

The language now introduced, though originally derived from the same source (Arian), was at this time distinctly different from the ancient British. We do not possess much information concerning the state of the Anglo-Saxon language in the 5th century. In all probability, it was but the barbarous jargon of rude uncivilised pirates; and wholly unfit for literary

purposes. But in course of time came improvement and refinement, and this language, long before a line of modern French, German, Italian, or Spanish existed, became vigorous, expressive, and exact; fit for many of the requirements of literature.

Anglo-Saxon was an inflected language. It had forms of declensions, and various terminations of cases, both in nouns and adjectives. For example:—

In the noun:—eag-e (an eye).

Sing.	N.	eag-e, <i>an eye</i>
	G. & D.	eag-an, <i>of, or to, an eye</i>
Plur.	G.	eag-ena, <i>of eyes</i>
	Ab.	eag-um, <i>with eyes, &c.</i>

In the adjective—gód (good).

	<i>Mas.</i>	<i>Fem.</i>	<i>Neut.</i>
N.	gód	gód	gód
G.	gód-es	gód-re	gód-es
D.	gód-um	gód-re	gód-um
A.	gód-ne	gód-e	gód
Ab.	gód-e	gód-e	gód.

The pronoun Ic (I) was thus declined:—

<i>Singular.</i>	<i>Dual.</i>	<i>Plural.</i>
N. Ic, <i>I</i>	N. wit, <i>we two</i>	N. we, <i>we</i>
G. min, <i>of me</i>	G. uncer, <i>of us two</i>	G. úre, <i>of us</i>
D. me, <i>to me</i>	D. unc, <i>to us two</i>	D. ús, <i>to us</i>
A. me, <i>me</i>	A. unc, <i>us two</i>	A. ús, <i>us.</i>

There were also various inflections of persons and tenses in verbs, as:—

<i>Present.</i>	<i>Past.</i>	<i>Participle.</i>
Ic luf-ige, <i>I love</i>	Ic luf-ode, <i>I loved</i>	(ge)-luf-od, <i>loved</i>
Ic drif-e, <i>I drive</i>	Ic dráf, <i>I drove</i>	(ge)-dri-fen, <i>driven.</i>

Saxon had also a great power of combination; both by prefix and affix, as well as by the union of roots,

&c. for example: *fic-treow* (fig-tree); *snaw-hwít* (snow-white); *lif-fæstan* (to quicken); *fore-rynel* (fore-runner), &c.

It also had a regular system of syntax:—Adjectives governing a case; as, "*Wintrum geong*," Young in years; a government of verbs; as, "*Ætla weóld Hunum*" (dat.), Attila ruled the Huns. Prepositions governing cases; as, "*Gá geond wegas and hegas* (acc.), Go through the ways and hedges; "*Uppon ánum beáme*" (dat.), Upon a beam, &c.

The inroads made by the Danes on Saxon England, and the eventual establishment of a Danish dynasty in the island, had no very marked effect on the language, as these marauders spoke a cognate language with the Saxon. Their influence in this respect is chiefly observable in the names of the places they occupied. They are known to have given their present names to the towns of Derby, Whitby, Allerby, &c., *bý* being the Danish form of the word signifying 'town.' The 'bye,' in the word 'bye-laws,' is also referred to a Danish origin.

This was the language of England from the middle of the 5th to the middle of the 11th century.

The next great change that took place in the language of this country was effected by the Norman conquest of England in the eleventh century. After Gaul was wrested from the Roman Empire, and fell into the hands of various barbarous tribes, the language of that country remained Latin, mixed with the dialects of the barbarians who now occupied the soil; viz., the Franks, Burgundians, and Visigoths. Out of this confusion of tongues there came forth, after a while, two distinct dialects; the *Langue d'oc*, or Pro-

vençal, spoken in the South, and the Langue d'oïl in the North, of France. The river Loire was the boundary of these two languages. They were also distinguished by the names applied respectively to their poets; those of the South being called Troubadours, and those of the North, Trouvères. The chief difference in character between these two languages was that the Langue d'oc possessed more of the Latin element, and was distinguished by its beauty and softness; whilst the Langue d'oïl, being derived from more numerous sources, and possessing a larger proportion of the Germanic element, had greater energy and force, and eventually superseded the Southern language. From this Langue d'oïl, or Norman-French, the modern French language has sprung, and it is in this division that we are more particularly interested, as it came in time to form a very considerable part of the English language.

The formation of the English language into the condition it afterwards attained, may be dated from this period, viz., 1066. Both our language and literature now take a new direction. Two great streams, the Norman-French and Anglo-Saxon, flow side by side, and yet without mingling together, for more than 200 years; the former used by the conquerors, and the latter by the conquered people. During the Norman, and for a considerable part of the Plantagenet, dynasty, French was spoken by the king and his nobles, and was used in the law-courts; Latin was the language of churchmen; and Saxon, that of the townsmen and peasants, that is, of the great majority of the population.

SAXON PERIOD.

A.D. 450—1066.

The following are specimens of Anglo-Saxon :—

1. *From Cædmon's "Paraphrase of the Scriptures"*
(7th century.)¹

Her ærest ge-sceóp éce Dryhten, Helm eal-
Now first shaped (the) eternal Lord, Chief of all
wihta, heofon and eorðan. Rodor a-rærde, and þis
creatures, Heaven and earth. (the) Firmament reared, and this
rúme land ge-staþelode strangum mihtum, Fréa
spacious land established with strong powers, The Lord
æl-mihtig.
Almighty.

2. *From King Alfred's translation of "Boethius."*²

Se-þe wille wyrcean wæstmþære-lond, a-teó of þám
He that will work fruit-ful land, let him pluck of the
æcere ærest sona fearn, and þornas, and fyrsas, swá-same
field first straightway ferns, and thorns, and furzes, as also

¹ Cædmon, a monk of Whitby in Yorkshire, has been called "the Father of English Song." He is the first of whom we possess any metrical composition. His known works are:—

1. A short ode, or hymn, in praise of the Creator; and 2. A long poem, or metrical paraphrase, of various parts of the Scriptures. Cædmon is supposed to have died about the year 680. A.D.

² Alfred, the greatest king that ever swayed the English sceptre, was celebrated, not only as a statesman and lawgiver, but also as a scholar and writer. He is the author of ten original works and eight translations; among the latter of which, the best known is that of the "Consolation of Philosophy," of Boethius. Alfred was born, 849; and died, 901. A.D.

weoð, þa þe willað wel hwaer derian clænum hwæte; þýlæs
 weeds, that will every-where hurt (the) clean wheat; lest
 he ciða-leás licge on þæm lande.
 it germ-less lie on the land.

The Gospels were translated by Ælfric into Saxon in the 9th or 10th century; the following is a specimen:—

3. *St. Matthew xii. 1. &c.*

1. Ss Hælend fōr on reste-dæg ofer æceras;
 The Saviour journeyed on (the) Sabbath through fields;
 sōð-lice his leorning-cnihtas hyngrede, and hīg ongunnon
 but his disciples hungered, and they began
 pluccian þa ear, and etan.
 (to) pluck the ears, and eat.

2. Sōð-lice þā þa sundor-hālgan þæt gesáwon, hī cwædon
 But when the Pharisees that saw, they said
 tó him: Nú þíne leorning-cnihtas doð þæt him alyfed
 to him: Now thy disciples do what to them allowed
 nis reste-dagum tó dónne.
 is not on Sabbath-days to do.

3. And he cwæð tó him: Ne rædde ge hwæt Dauid dyde
 And he said to them: Have ye not read what David did
 þa hine hyngrede, and þa þe mid him wæron;
 to him hungry, and they that with him were;

4. Hú he in-eóde on Godes hús, and æt þa offring-
 How he entered into God's house, and ate the offering-
 hláfas þe næron him a-lyfede tó etanne, búton þám
 loaves which were not (to) him allowed to eat, but to the
 sacerdum ánum? &c.
 priests alone? &c.

4. *From the "Saxon Chronicle."*¹

[Annals of the earliest Anglo-Saxon times to A. D. 1154, compiled by various monks.]

A.D. 596. Her Gregorius Papa sende tó Brytene Au-
Now Gregory (the) Pope sent to Britain Au-
gustinum mid wel monegum munucum, þa Godes word
gustine with full many monks, that God's word (they)
sceoldon bodian Angel-cynne.
should announce to the Angle-race.

A.D. 901. Her forð-ferde Ælf-red, Æðel-wulfing, six nihtum
Now went forth Alfred, son of Ethelwulf, six nights
æf Ealra Hálígra Mæssan; se wæs cyning ofer éal Angel-
before All Hallows' Mass; he was king over all the Angle-
cyn, bútan þám dæle þe under Dena on-wealde wæs. And
race, except that part which by the Danes ruled was. And
he heöld þæt rice óðer-healf gear læs þe þryttig wintra.
he held that kingdom one and a half year less than thirty winters.

The following is a specimen of the language brought into England at the Norman Conquest, commonly called Anglo-Norman, or Norman-French : —

From the poem of Charlemagne.

Un jur fu Karleún al Saint Denis muster
One day was Charles at Saint Denis minster
Reout pris sa corune, en croix seignat sun chef,
Had taken his crown, in cross marked his head,

¹ What is called the "Saxon Chronicle" is not the work of one hand, but that of a great number of writers. It is a series of records of English annals from the earliest times to the end of the Norman dynasty, 1154.

E ad ceinte sa espée; li pons fud d'or mer,
And had girt his sword; the hilt was of gold pure,

Dux i out, e demeines, e baruns, e chevalers.
Dukes there he had, and lords, and barons, and cavaliers.

Li emperéres reguardet la reine sa muillers;
The emperor looked at the queen his wife;

Ele fut ben coronée al plus bel e as meux.
She was well crowned as the most beautiful and as the best.

For 200 years, viz., from the middle of the 11th till the middle of the 13th century, the Norman-French and Saxon were both used in this country. How far the former affected the latter is not positively known; but the following authenticated facts prove that Saxon was not much encouraged during this period:—

1. Private letters were always written in Latin.
2. Conversation between students of the universities was ordered to be carried on in Latin.
3. All law proceedings and documents concerning the corporation of London were in French.
4. Latin was translated into French by boys at school.

But whatever attempts may have been made to exterminate the old language, it was still preserved, though, in the course of the above-named period, it underwent various changes in form and inflection. From the Conquest till 1250, it is called by modern writers Semi, or Half, Saxon. This is the Saxon in a state of transition, when it had ceased to be genuine Saxon, but was not yet English:—

SEMI-SAXON PERIOD.

A.D. 1066—1250.

(1.) *Specimen of Semi-Saxon in two dialects.*

Bladud hafde ene sune

Bladud had a son

Leir was ihaten ;

Leir was hight ;

Efter his fader daie

After his father's days

He heold þis drihlice lond

He held this liege land

Somed an his live,

Together through his life,

Sixti winter.

Sixty winters.

He makade ane riche burh

He made a rich borough

Ðurh radfulle his crafte,

Thro' wise his craft,

And he heo lette nemnen

And he let it name

Efter him seolvan ;

After him self ;

Kaer-Leir hehte þe burh.

Caer-Lear hight the burgh.

Leof heo was þan kinge,

Dear it was to the king,

Ða we, an ure leod-quide,

Which we, in our language,

Leir-chestre clepiad

Leicester call

Geare a þan holde dawon.

Of yore in the old days.

Bladud hadde one sone

Bladud had a son

Leir was ihote ;

Leir was hight ;

After his fader he held þis lond

After his father he held the land

In his owene hond

In his own hand

Haste his lif-dages,

Through his life days,

Sixti winter.

Sixty winters.

He makede on riche borh

He made a rich borough

Ðorh wisemenne reade,

Through wise men's counsel,

And hine lette nemni

And he let it name

After him seolve ;

After him self ;

Kair Leir hehte þe borh.

Kaer-Lear hight the borough.

Leof he was þan kinge,

Dear it was to the king,

Ða we, on ure speche,

Which we, in our speche,

Leþ-chester cleopiep

Leicester call

In þan colde daiye.

In the old days.

There is a metrical translation of *Wace's* poem, the "Brut d'Angleterre," by one Layamon, a priest of Ernely, on the Severn. Though its exact date is not known, there are good grounds for believing that it was written at the close of the 12th century. If so, it throws a valuable light on the history of our language at this period of its existence. The following is a specimen:—

2. *Extract from an account of the proceedings at Arthur's coronation, given by Layamon (about 1180?):—*

Tha the king igeten hafde,
 When the king eaten had,
 And all his mon-weorede.
 And all his many multitude,
 Tha bugan out of burghe
 Then fled out of the town
 Theines swithen balde.
 The people very quickly.
 Alle tha kinges,
 All the kings,
 And heore here-thringes;
 And their servant-throngs;
 Alle tha bisceopes,
 All the bishops,
 And alle tha clarckes;
 And all the priests;
 Alle the eorles,
 All the earls,
 And alle tha beornes;
 And all the nobles;
 Alle tha theines,
 All the people,

Alle the sweines,
All the swains,

Feire iscrudde,
Fairly dressed,

Helde geon felde.
Held through fields.

Summe heo gunnen ærnen,
Some they began to shoot (arrows),

Summe heo gunnen urnen,
Some they began to run,

Summe heo gunnen lepen,
Some they began to leap,

Summe heo gunnen sceoten,
Some they began to shoot (darts),

Summe heo wrastleden,
Some they wrestled,

And wither-gome makeden.
And contest-games made.

Summe heo on velde
Some they in fields

Pleouweden under scelde ;
Played under shields ;

Summe heo driven balles
Some they drove balls

Wide geond the felde.
Wide through the fields.

Moni ane kunnes gomen
Many a kind (of) game

Ther heo gunnen drinen.
There they began to urge.

And wha swa mihte iwenne
And who so might win

Wurthscepe of his gomene,
Worship of his gaming,
Hine me ladde mide songe
Him one led with song
At foren than leod kinge.
Before the people's king.
And the king, for his gomene,
And the king, for his gaming,
Gaf him geven gode.
Gave him gifts good.
Alle tha quene
All the queens
The icumen weoren there,
Who were come there,
And alle tha lafdies,
And all the ladies,
Leoneden geond walles
Leaned over the walls
To bihalden the duge then
To behold the nobles then
And that folc plæie.
And that folk play.
This ilæste threo dæges,
This lasted three days,
Swulc gomes, and swulc plægghs,
Such games, and such plays.
Tha, at than veorthe dæie,
Then, at the fourth day,
The king gon to spekene,
The king went to council,
And agaf his gode cnihten
And gave his good knights

habbeth idon, and schullen don, in the worthnesse of Gode, and
 have done, and shall do, in the honour of God, and
 on ure treowthe, for the freme of the loande, thurg the besigte
 in our truth, for the good of the land, through the business
 of than to-foreniseide redesmen, beo stedefaest and ilestinde in
 of the to-foresaid counsellors, be steadfast and lasting in
 alle thinge abuten aende. &c.
 all things without end. &c.

3. *The commencement of Robert of Gloucester's*
"Chronicle" (about A. D. 1300¹): —

Engelond ys a wel god lond, ich wene, of each lond best,
 England is a very good land, I ween, of every land (the) best,
 Yset in the ende of the world, as al in the West,
 Set in the end of the world, as wholly in the West,
 The see goth hym al a boutte, he stont as an yle;
 The sea goeth it all about, it standeth as an isle;
 Here fon heo durre the lasse doute, but hit be thorw gyle
 Her foes she need the less fear, except it be through guile
 Of fol of the selue lond, as me hath yseye wyle.
 Of folk of the same land, as one has seen sometimes.
 From South to North he is long eighte hondred myle;
 From South to North it is long eight hundred mile;
 And foure hondred myle brod from Est to West to wende
 And four hundred mile broad from East to West to wend
 Amydde tho lond as yt be, and noght as by the on ende. &c.
 Amid the land as it be, and not as by the one ende. &c.

¹ Robert of Gloucester is supposed to have been a monk in the abbey of that city. Nothing is known of his biography. His work is an account of English affairs, from the beginning, down to his own time. The chronicle is in rhyme, and consists of more than 10,000 lines.

4. *From Robert de Brunne's Translation of Piers de Langtoft's "French Chronicle" (1340 ?¹):—*

Edward did smyte rounde peny, halfpeny, ferthing,
 The croise passed the bounde of alle thorghout the ryng,
 The kyng's side salle be the hede, and his name writen,
 The croyce side, what citè it was in coyned and smyten;
 A thousand and two hundred and fourscore yeres mo,
 Of this monè men wondred first when it gan go.

About the middle of the 14th century the French language declined, and was eventually discontinued in England. This was, in all probability, materially assisted by the strong national feeling against the French in the reign of Edward III.; a natural consequence of the wars of that monarch with France. There is also evidence to show that, at the same period, the practice of making boys construe Latin into French was discontinued, English being substituted for French, as a medium of instruction in grammar schools. Again, it was ordered, in 1362, that henceforward all trials should be conducted in the English, and not in the French, language. Thus the ascendancy of the Saxon over the French element in our language was established, and dates from this period.

¹ Robert Manning was a canon in the monastery of Brunne (or Bourne), in Lincolnshire, who lived in the latter part of Edward the First, and the whole of Edward the Second's, reign. He translated a French Chronicle of England by Peter de Langtoft, a monk of Bridlington in Yorkshire.

PERIOD OF MIDDLE ENGLISH.

A.D. 1350—1550.

1. *Extract from Lawrence Minot's poem on "Edward the Third's Expedition to France" (about 1350¹):—*

Edward, owre comely king,
 In Braband has his woning²,
 With many comely knight;
 And in that land, truely to tell,
 Ordains he still for to dwell,
 To time³ he think to fight.

Now God, that is of mightés mast⁴,
 Grant him grace of the Holy Ghasht
 His heritage to win;
 And Mary, Moder, of mercy free,
 Save our king and his meny⁵
 Fro sorrow, shame, and sin.

Thus in Braband he has been,
 Where he before was seldom seen,
 For to prove their japes⁶;
 Now no langer will he spare—
 Bot unto France fast will he fare,
 To comfort him with grapes.

¹ Lawrence Minot lived and wrote about the middle of the 14th century. His poems are chiefly concerning the battles and victories of Edward III., and are remarkable for their vigour and heroic spirit.

² Dwelling.

³ Until.

⁴ Most of might, most mighty.

⁵ Many; followers.

⁶ Jeers.

Furth he farèd into France,
 God save him fro mischance,
 And all his company ;
 The noble Dukè of Braband
 With him went into that land,
 Ready to live or die.

Then the rich flower de lice¹
 Wan there full little price,
 Fast he fled for feard :
 The right heir of that countree
 Is comen², with all his knightès free,
 To shake him by the beard.

Sir Philip the Valays³
 Wit⁴ his men in tho days,
 To battle had he thought.⁵
 He bade his men them purvey,
 Withouten langer delay ;
 But he ne held it nought.

He brought folk full great won⁶—
 Aye, seven agains⁷ one—
 That full well weaponed were ;
 But soon, when he heard ascry⁸,—
 That King Edward was near thereby,
 Then durst he nought come near.

In that morning fell a mist,
 And when our Englishmen it wist,
 It changèd all their cheer ;
 Our king unto God made his boon⁹,
 And God sent him good comfort soon,
 The weader wax¹⁰ full clear, &c.

¹ Fleur de lys.² Philip VI de Valois.³ He intended to fight.⁴ Against.⁵ Vow.⁶ Come.⁷ Told, informed.⁸ A great number of people.⁹ The report.¹⁰ The weather grew.

2. *From Langland's Poem of the "Vision of Piers Ploughman"* (written about 1360¹): —

In a summer season,
 When soft was the sun,
 I shoop² me into shrouds³
 As I a sheep⁴ were;
 In habit as a hermit
 Unholy of werkes⁵,
 Went wide into this world
 Wonders to hear;
 Ac⁶ on a May morwening,
 On Malvern hills,
 Me befel a ferly⁷;
 I was weary for-wandered⁸,
 And went me to rest
 Under a brood⁹ bank,
 By a burn's¹⁰ side;
 And as I lay and leaned
 And looked on the waters,
 I slumbered into a sleeping,
 It swayed so mury.¹¹
 Then gan I meten¹²

¹ Of the author of "The Vision of Piers Ploughman," Robert, or, according to some, William Langland, little, if anything, is known. He is supposed to have been a monk, residing somewhere in the West of England. His poem, which is an allegorical satire against the clergy, exhibits a revival of the Saxon alliteration, and consists of between 14,000 and 15,000 lines.

² Put.

³ Clothes.

⁴ Shepherd.

⁵ An unholy hermit; one who goes into the world.

⁶ And.

⁷ A wonder.

⁸ Weary of wandering.

⁹ Broad.

¹⁰ Stream, brook.

¹¹ It sounded so merry (pleasant).

¹² To meet.

A marvellous sweven¹,
 That I was in a wilderness,
 Wist I never where ;
 And as I beheld into the East,
 On high to the Sun,
 I seigh² a tower on a toft³
 Frieliche ymaked⁴ ;
 A deep dale beneath,
 A donjon therein,
 With deep ditches and darke,
 And dreadful of sight⁵ ;
 A fair field full of folk
 Found I there between,
 Of all manner of men,
 The mean and the rich,
 Werking and wandering
 As the world asketh.
 &c. &c. &c.

3. *Extract from the 14th Chapter of Sir John Mandeville's "Travels" (written about 1370⁶):—*

And zee schull vnderstonde that Machamete was
 born in Arabye, that was first a pore knaue⁷ that kept
 cameles that wenten with marchantes for marchandise
 in to Egipt, and thei were thanne Cristene in tho
 partyes. And at the desartes of Arabye he wente in to
 a chapell wher a that was but a lytill and a low thing,

¹ Dream.

² Saw.

³ High ground ; tuft.

⁴ Handsomely made.

⁵ Dreadful to behold.

⁶ Sir John Mandeville, our earliest prose writer, was born at St. Albans in the year 1300, and died at Liège in 1372. His book of voyages and travels, which is remarkably clear and correct in style, is a singular collection of the marvellous legends of the middle ages.

⁷ A poor boy.

and had but a lytil dor' and a low, than the entree began to wexe so gret and so large and so high, as though it had be of a gret mynster, or the zate of a paleys.¹ And this was the first myracle the Sarazins seyn that Machomete dide in his zouth. After began he for to wexe wyse and riche; and he was a gret astronomer; and after, he was gouvernour and prince of the land of Corrodane, and he gouerned it full wisely, in such manere, that when the prince was ded, he toke the lady to wyfe that highte Gadridge. And Machomete fell often in the grete sikeness that men calle the fallynge euyll. Wherfore the lady was full sory that euere sche toke him to husbonde. But Machomete made hire to beleeeve that all tymes when he' fell so, Gabriel the angel cam for to speke with him, and for the grete light and brightnesse of the angell, he might not susteyne him fro fallynge, &c.

4. *St. Luke, Chap. XVI. Wiclif's Translation*
(about 1380²):—

Forsothe he seide also to his disciples, Ther was sum³ riche man, that hadde a fermour, ether a baily; and this was defamyd anentis him, as he had wastid his goódis. And he clepide him, and seide to him, What heere I this thing of thee? yeld resoun⁴ of thi

¹ The gate of a palace.

² John Wiclif, professor of Theology at Baliol College, Oxford, was born 1324, and died 1384. His greatest work was a translation of the Scriptures into English. The whole still exists in manuscript, but only the New Testament has been printed. Wiclif's style, though occasionally animated, is generally rude and coarse.

³ A certain.

⁴ Give an account.

ferme, for now thou schalt not mowe hold thi ferme. Forsoth the fermour seide with ynne him silf, What schal I do, for my lord taketh away fro me the ferme? I may not delue, I am aschamyd to begge. I woot what I schal do, that whanne I schal be remouyd fro the ferme, thei receyue me in to her housis. And alle the dettours of the lord clepid to gidere, he seide to the firste, Hou moche owist thou to my lord? And he said to him, An hundrid barelis of oyle. And he seide to him, Taak thin obligacioun, and sitte soon, and wryt fifti. Aftirward he seide to another, Sothli hou moche owist thou? Which seide, An hundrid mesuris of whete. And he seide to him, Tak thi lettris, and wryt foure score. And the lord preiseide the fermour of wickidnesse, for he hadde don prudently; for the sones of this world ben more prudent in her generacioun than the sones of light. And I seie to you, Make to you frendes of the richesse of wickidnesse, that, whan ye shulen fayle, thei receyue you in to everlastyne tabernaclis.

5. *From the Translation of Higden's "Polychronicon,"*
by Trevisa (1385¹):—

This apayringe² of the birthe tonge is by cause of tweye thinges: oon is for children in scole, agenes³ the usage and maner of alle other naciouns, beth

¹ Ralph Higden, author of the Latin Chronicle called the "Polychronicon," was a Benedictine monk of Chester, where he died about 1370. His work was translated by John de Trevisa in the year 1385.

² Disparaging.

³ Against.

compelled for to leve her owne langage, and for to constrewe her lessons and her thingis a Frensche, and have siththe¹ that the Normans come first into Eng-
lond. Also gentil mennes children beth ytaught for to speke Frensche from the tyme that thei beth rokked in her cradel, and kunneth speke and playe with a childes brooche. And uplondish² men wol likne hem self to gentil men, and fondeth with grete bisynesse for to speke Frensche, for to be the more ytold of.

This maner was myche yused to fore the first moreyn,³ and is siththe som del ychaungide. For John Cornwaile, a maistre of grammer, chaungide the lore in grammer scole and construction of Frensch into Englisch, and Richard Pencriche lerned that maner teching of him, and other men of Pencriche. So that now, the yere of our Lord a thousand thre hundred foure score and fyve, of the secunde King Rychard after the Conquest nyne, in alle the gramer scoles of Englund children leveth Frensch, and construeth and lerneth an Englisch, and haveth therby avauntage in oon side and desavauntage in another. Her avauntage is, that thei lerneth her gramer in lasse tyme than children were wont to do. Desavauntage is, that now children of gramer scole kunneth no more Frensch that can her lifte heele.⁴ And that is harm for them, and thei schul passe the see and travaile in strange londes, and in many other places also. Also gentil men haveth now mych ylefted for to teche⁵ her children Frensch.

¹ Since.

² Country.

³ Before the first murrain.

⁴ Know no more French than their left heel.

⁵ Discontinued teaching.

6. *From the Prologue to Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" (about 1390¹):—*

There was also a nun, a Prioress,
 That of her smiling was full simple and coy, —
 Her greatest oathè, n'as but by St. Loy!²
 And she was cleped³ Madame Eglantine.
 Full well she sangè the service divine,
 Entuned in her nose full sweetly;
 And French she spake, full fair and fetisly⁴,
 After the school of Stratford attè Bow —
 For French of Paris was to her unknow.⁵
 At meatè was she well y-taught, withal —
 She let no morsels from her lippes fall,
 Ne wet her fingers in her saucè deep:
 Well could she carry a morsel, and well keep
 Thattè no drop ne fell upon her breast.
 In curtesy was set full much her lest⁶;
 Her over-lippè wipèd she so clean,
 That in her cuppè was no ferthing⁷ seen,
 Of greasè, when she drunken had her draught.
 Full seemèly after her meat she raught⁸,
 And sicklerly⁹: she was of great disport,

¹ Geoffrey Chaucer (1328–1400) is distinguished as "The Father of English Poetry." His writings are very voluminous, but the "Canterbury Tales" is the work on which his reputation is mainly founded. Here, his versification is flowing and harmonious, and his expression clear and correct. In this poem he displays a wonderful knowledge of human character; exquisite humour, delicate sensibility, and deep feeling. The "Canterbury Tales" consist of about 17,000 lines.

² St. Eloi.

⁴ Neatly.

⁶ Pleasure.

⁸ Reached.

³ Called.

⁵ Unknown.

⁷ Small spot, or stain.

⁹ Surely, certainly.

And full pleasant, and amiable of port,
 And painèd her¹ to counterfeiten cheer
 Of court, and been estatelich of manere,
 And to been holden digne of reverence.²

But for to speaken of her conscience,
 She was so charitable and so pitous
 She woldè weep if that she saw a mouse
 Caught in a trap, if it were dead or bled.
 Of smalè houndès had she that she fed
 With roasted flesh, and milk, and wæstel bread
 But sore wept she if one of them were dead,
 Or if men smote it with a yerdè³ smart;
 And all was conscience, and tender heart.

7. *From Lydgate's "Testament"* (supposed to have
 been written about 1450⁴): —

During the tymè of this sesoun, Ver⁵,
 I meene the sesoun of my yeerys greene,
 Gynning fro childhood, stretched up so fer
 To the yeerys accounted ful fiftene,
 B' experiencè, as it was weel seene,
 The gerissche sesoun straunge of condiciouns,
 Dispoosayd to many unbridlyd passiouns;

¹ And she took pains.

² Worthy of respect.

³ Yard, stick.

⁴ John Lydgate, a monk of St. Edmund's Bury, flourished about the year 1430. His muse was wonderfully prolific; for as many as 250 poems have been attributed to him. Lydgate's style is diffusive, and exhibits but little imagination. He must have possessed an extraordinary facility in the art of verse-making.

⁵ Spring season.

Voyd of resoun, yove to wilfulnesse,
 Froward to vertu, of thrift gafe litil heede,
 Loth to lerne, lovèd no besynesse,
 Sauþ pley or merthe, straunge to spelle or reade,
 Lihtly tournyng, wylde, and seelde sad,
 Weeping for nouhte, and anon afftir glad, &c.

8. *From Caxton's Translation of Higden's "Polychronicon"* (1482¹):—

And here I make an ende of this lytel werke as nygh as I can fynde after the forme of the werk to fore made by Ranulph monk of Chestre. And where as ther is fawte, I beseche them that shal rede it to correcte it. For yf I coude haue founden moo storyes I wolde have sette in hit moo; but the substaunce that I can fynde and knowe I haue shortly sette hem in this book, to thentente that such thynges as haue ben done syth the deth or ende of the sayde boke of Polycronycon shold be had in remembrance and not put in oblyuon ne forgetyng; prayenge all them that shall see this symple werke to pardone me of my symple and rude wrytyng. Ended the second day of Juyll, the XXII yere of the regne of Kynge Edward the Fourth, and of the Incarnacioun of oure Lord a thousand four honderd foure score and tweyne.

¹ William Caxton, the first English printer, was born somewhere in Kent, in the year 1412. He set up his printing-press at Westminster between the years 1474-1477; and from that time continued to print and translate till his death, which took place in 1491 or 1492.

9. *From Sir Thomas More's "Dialogue concerning Heresies" (1528¹): —*

Some priest, to bring up a pilgrimage in his parishe, may devise some false felowe fayning himselfe to come seke a saint in his chyrch, and there sodeinly say, that he hath gotten hys syght. Then shall ye have the belles rong for a miracle. And the fonde folke of the countrey soon made foles. Than women commynge thither with theyr candels. And the Person byenge of some lame begger iii or iiij payre of their olde crutches, with xii pennes spent in men and women of wex, thrust thorowe divers places, some with arrowes, and some wyth rusty knyves, will make his offerynges for one vij yere worth twise hys tythes.

Thys is, quoth I, very trouth that suche thynges may be, and sometimes to be in dede. As I remember me that I have hard my father tell of a begger, that in Kyng Henry his daies the sixt cam with his wife to Saint Albonis. And there was walking about the towne begging, a five or six dayes before the Kinges commynge thither, saienge that he was borne blinde, and never sawe in hys lyfe. And was warned in hys dreame, that he shoulde come out of Berwyke, where he said he had ever dwelled, to seke Saynt Albon, and that he had ben at his shryne, and had

¹ The English works of Sir Thomas More (1480–1555), the celebrated Chancellor of Henry VIII., are the first entitled to the name of classical English prose. Among the most important are: "The Life and Reign of Edward V.," his "Dialogue concerning Heresies," and the letter he wrote to his wife after the burning of his house at Chelsea (1528).

not bene holpen. And therefore he woulde go seke hym at some other place, for he had hard some say sins he came that Saint Albonys body shold be at Colon, and in dede such a contencion hath ther ben. But of troth, as I am surely informed, he lieth here at Saint Albonis, saving some reliques of him, which thei there shew shrined. But to tell you forth, whan the kyng was comen, and the towne full, sodaynlye thys blind man, at Saint Albonis shryne had his sight agayne, and a myracle solemply rongen, and *Te Deum* songen, so that nothyng was talked of in al the towne but this myracle, &c.

10. *A Sonnet, by Lord Surrey* (about 1545¹): —

Give place, ye lovers, here before,
That spent your boasts and brags in vain !
My lady's beauty passeth more
The best of yours, I dare well sayn,
Than doth the sun the candle-light,
Or brightest day the darkest night.

And thereto had a troth as just
As had Penelope the fair ;
For what she saith, ye may it trust
As it by writing sealèd were :
And virtues hath she many mo
Than I with pen have skill to show.

¹ Thomas Howard, eldest son of the Duke of Norfolk, and the last victim of the tyranny of Henry VIII, was born 1516, and beheaded on Tower Hill, 1547. His poetry is melodious and polished, but not remarkable for depth either of intellect or feeling. He was the first to introduce the sonnet, and blank verse, into English poetry.

I could rehearse, if that I would,
The whole effect of Nature's plaint
When she had lost the perfit mould,
The like to whom she ne'er could paint :
With wringing hands, how she did cry,
And what she said, I know it, I

I know she swore, with raging mind,
Her kingdom only set apart,
There was no loss by law of kind
That could have gone so near her heart ;
And this was chiefly all her pain,—
“ She could not make the like again.”

Since Nature thus gave her the praise
To be the chiefest work she wrought ;
In faith, methink, some better ways
On your behalf might well be sought,
Than to compare, as ye have done,
To match the candle with the sun.

11. *Extract from Latimer's third Sermon preached
before Edward VI., at Westminster, 1549.*¹

(In the original spelling.)

Syr, what forme of preachinge would you appoynt
me to preache before a Kynge ? Wold you have me
for to preache nothyng as concernyng a Kynge in
the Kynges sermon ? Have you any commission to

¹ Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, and the son of a farmer in Leicestershire, was born about the year 1472, and was burnt to death at the stake in 1555. His “Sermons,” which were published at different times, are quaint and homely in expression, and familiar in illustration ; but they contain no evidence of any great literary power.

appoynt me what I shall preache? Besydes thys, I asked hym dyvers other questions, and he wold make no answer to none of them all. He had nothyng to say. Then I turned me to the Kyng, and submitted myselfe to his Grace, and sayed I never thoughte myselfe worthy, nor I never sued to be a preacher before youre Grace, but I was called to it, would be wylling (if you mislyke me) to give place to my betters. For I graunt ther be a great many more worthy of the rounge than I am. And if it be your Grace's pleasure so to allowe them for preachers, I could be content to bere their bokes after theym. But if your Grace allowe me for a preacher I would desyre your Grace to geve me leve to discharge my conscience. Geve me leve to frame my doctrine accordyng to my audience. I had byne a very dolt to have preached so at the borders of your realm, as I preach before your Grace. And I thanke Almyghty God whych hath alwayesbyne remedy that my sayinges were well accepted of the Kynge, for, like a gracious Lord he turned into another communicacyon. It is even as the Scripture sayeth, *Cor Regis in manu Domini*, the Lorde dyrected the King's hart, &c.

The early part of the sixteenth century was distinguished for learning and intellectual activity in England, and a considerable improvement in our language took place during the reign of Henry VIII. We find, towards the close of this reign, innumerable complaints from writers, of the large number of words now introduced into English from foreign sources. But these new words, which were then probably necessary for the expression of the increased energy

of the people, soon became assimilated with the national tone of thought, and the English language was now fixed and consolidated. Whatever changes it may have undergone, either from the loss of obsolete words, or the introduction of new terms, it has, from this period, remained in the same state both as regards its idiomatic forms, and structural character.

PERIOD OF MODERN ENGLISH.

A.D. 1550—1850, &c.

1. *Extract from Sackville's "Mirror for Magistrates."*¹

1557.

In black all clad, there fell before my face
A piteous wight, whom woe had all forwast;
Forth from her eyen, the crystal tears outbrast,
And, sighing sore, her hands she wrong and fold,
Tearing her hair, that ruth was to behold.

Her body small, forwithered and forspent,
As is the stalk with summer's drought opprest;
Her wealked face with woful tears besprent,
Her colour pale, and, as it seemed her best,
In woe and plaint, reposed was her rest;

¹ Thomas Sackville, Earl of Dorset, was born in 1536 at Buckhurst, in Sussex, and died in 1608. His works are:—the "Tragedy of Ferrex and Porrex," afterwards called "Gorboduc," and the "Induction," or Preface, to the "Mirror for Magistrates." The "Induction" is considered to possess great merit. The style is graphic in the portraiture of the allegorical personages introduced, and the language is stately and solemn. Spenser is said to have taken Sackville as a model on which to form his style.

And as the stone that drops of water wears,
So dented were her cheeks with fall of tears.

I stood aghast, beholding all her plight,
Tween dread and dolour, so distraiped in heart
That, while my knees upstarted with the sight,
The tears outstreamed for sorrow of her smart;
But, when I saw no end that could apart
The deadly dole which she so sore did make,
With doleful voice, then thus to her I spake, &c.

2. *From Roger Ascham's "Schoolmaster:"—about 1563.*¹

Learning teacheth more in one year than experience in twenty; and learning teacheth safely when experience maketh miserable than wise. He hazardeth sore that waxeth wise by experience. An unhappy master he is that is made cunning by many shipwrecks; a miserable merchant that is neither rich nor wise but after some bankrouths. It is costly wisdom that is bought by experience. We know by experience itself that it is a marvelous pain, to find out but a short way by long wandering. And surely, he that would prove wise by experience, he may be witty indeed, but even like a swift runner that runneth fast

¹ Roger Ascham was born in 1515, at Kirby Wiske, near North Allerton, in Yorkshire, and died December 30th, 1568. He was tutor to the Lady—afterwards Queen—Elizabeth. In 1563, he was invited by Sir Richard Sackville to write "The Schoolmaster," a treatise on education, which he completed, but did not publish. Dr. Johnson says, that "The Schoolmaster" contains the best advice that was ever given for the study of languages.

out of his way, and upon the night, he knoweth not whither. And verily they be the fewest in number that be happy or wise by unlearned experience. And look well upon the former life of those few, whether your example be old or young, who, without learning, have gathered by long experience, a little wisdom, and some happiness; and when you do consider what mischief they have committed, what dangers they have escaped (and yet twenty for one do perish in the adventure), then think well with yourself, whether ye would that your own son should come to wisdom and happiness by the way of such experience or no.

3. *From Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia :"—about 1580.*¹

There were hills which garnished their proud heights with stately trees; humble valleys, whose base estate seemed comforted with the refreshing of silver rivers; meadows enamelled with all sorts of eye-pleasing flowers; thickets, which being lined with most pleasant shade, were witnessed so to by the cheerful disposition of many well-tuned birds; each

¹ Sir Philip Sidney was born, 1554, at Penshurst in Kent; and died of a wound received in the battle of Zutphen, 1586. His character has been regarded as a model of the English gentleman of that age. His works display great brilliancy of imagination, with a chasteness of sentiment well calculated to refine the taste of the times. The "Arcadia," his principal work, was never completed, nor was it published in his lifetime. He also wrote sonnets, songs, and various other miscellaneous pieces.

pasture stored with sheep feeding with sober security ; while the pretty lambs, with bleating oratory, craved the dam's comfort ; here a shepherd's boy piping, as though he should never be old ; there a young shepherdess knitting and withal singing ; and it seemed that her voice comforted her hands to work, and her hands kept time to her voice music.

4. *From Spenser's Faerie Queene :—about 1590.*¹

(Adventure of Una with the Lion.)

Yet she, most faithful lady, all this while
 Forsaken, woeful, solitary maid,
 Far from all people's praise, as in exile,
 In wilderness and wasteful deserts strayed,
 To seek her knight ; who, subtly betrayed
 Through that late vision which the enchanter wrought,
 Had her abandoned ; she, of nought afraid,
 Through woods and wateness wide him daily sought,
 Yet wished tidings none of him unto her brought.

One day, nigh weary of the irksome way,
 From her unhasty beast she did alight ;
 And on the grass her dainty limbs did lay,
 In secret shadow, far from all men's sight.
 From her fair head her fillet she undight,
 And laid her stole aside ; her angel's face
 As the great eye of Heaven, shined bright,
 And made a sunshine in the shady place,
 Did never mortal eye behold such heavenly grace.

¹ Edmund Spenser, one of the four greatest poets of England, is generally classed with Chaucer, Shakspeare, and Milton. He was born in East Smithfield, London, in 1553, and died in King Street, Westminster, in 1599. The "Faerie Queene" is his great work. It is full of beauty and melody, and captivating by its chivalrous and moral tone.

It fortunèd, out of the thickest wood,
 A ramping lion rushèd, suddenly,
 Hunting, full greedy, after savage blood :
 Soon as the royal virgin he did spy,
 With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,
 To have at once devoured her tender corse.
 But to the prey when as he drew more nigh,
 His bloody rage assuagèd with remorse,
 And, with the sight amazed, forgot his furious force.

Instead thereof, he kissed her weary feet,
 And licked her lily hands with fawning tongue ;
 As he her wrongèd innocence did weet, —
 O, how can beauty master the most strong !
 And simple truth subdue avenging wrong !
 Whose yielded pride, and proud submission,
 Still dreading death, when she had markèd long,
 Her heart 'gan melt in great compassion,
 And drizzling tears did shed for pure affection.

“The lion, lord of every beast in field,”
 Quoth she, “his princely puissance doth abate :
 And mighty proud to humble weak does yield,
 Forgetful of the hungry rage which late
 Him pricked, in pity of my sad estate :
 But he, my lion, and my noble lord,
 How does he find in cruel heart to hate
 Her that him loved, and ever most adored,
 As the God of my life ! why hath he me abhorred !”

Redounding tears did choke th' end of her plaint,
 Which softly echoed from the neighbour wood ;
 And, sad to see her sorrowful constraint,
 The kingly beast upon her gazing stood,
 With pity calmed down fell his angry mood.
 At last, in close heart shutting up her pain,
 Arose the virgin born of heavenly brood,
 And to her snowy palfrey got again
 To seek her strayèd champion if she might attain.

The lion would not leave her desolate,
 But with her went along, as a strong guard
 Of her chaste person, and a faithful mate
 Of her sad troubles and misfortunes hard :
 Still, when she slept, he kept both watch and ward ;
 And when she waked, he waited, diligent,
 With humble service to her will prepared ;
 From her fair eyes he took commandement,
 And ever by her looks conceived her intent.

5. *From Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity:"—about
 1600.*¹

(*Church Music.*)

Touching musical harmony, whether by instrument or by voice, it being but of high and low sounds a due proportionable disposition, such notwithstanding is the force thereof, and so pleasing effects it hath in that very part of man which is most divine, that some have been thereby induced to think that the soul itself by nature is, or hath in it, harmony ; a thing which delighteth all ages, and beseemeth all states ; a thing as seasonable in grief as in joy ; as decent, being added unto actions of greatest weight and solemnity, as being used when most men most sequester themselves from action. The reason hereof is an admirable facility

¹ Richard Hooker, the illustrious author of "Ecclesiastical Polity," was born near Exeter in the year 1554, and died at Bishopsbourne, in Kent, of which he held the living, in 1600. Four books of his great work were published in 1594, and a fifth in 1597. The remaining three were completed, but not published till after his death. Hooker's style is almost unrivalled for sustained dignity of tone, at the same time that it is perfectly unaffected and idiomatic.

which music hath to express and represent to the mind, more inwardly than any other sensible mean, the very standing, rising, and falling, the very steps and inflections every way, the turns and varieties of all passions whereunto the mind is subject; yea, so to imitate them, that whether it resemble unto us the same state wherein our minds already are, or a clean contrary, we are not more contentedly by the one confirmed, than changed and led away by the other. In harmony, the very image and character even of virtue and vice is perceived, the mind delighted with their resemblances, and brought, by having them often iterated, into the tone of the things themselves. For which cause, there is nothing more contagious and pestilent than some kinds of harmony; than some, nothing more strong and potent unto good.

6. *Extract from a letter of Sir Walter Raleigh to his wife, shortly before his execution:—about 1618.*¹

You shall receive, my dear wife, my last words in these my last lines; my love I send you that you may keep when I am dead, and my counsel, that you may remember it when I am no more. I would not, with my will, present you sorrows, dear Bess; let them

¹ Sir Walter Raleigh was born, 1552, at Hayes Farm in Devonshire, and was executed in 1618. During the twelve years of his imprisonment he wrote most of his works, especially his "History of the World," of which he finished only from the Creation to the Fall of the Macedonian Empire. The style of this work is lively and exciting, and shows the ardent and impetuous character of the author.

go to the grave with me, and be buried in the dust. And seeing that it is not the will of God, that I shall see you any more, bear my destruction patiently, and with a heart like yourself.

First, I send you all the thanks which my heart can conceive, or my words express, for your many travails and cares for me, which though they have not taken effect as you wished, yet my debt to you is not the less; but pay it I never shall in this world.

Secondly, I beseech you, for the love you bear me living, that you do not hide yourself many days, but by your travails seek to help my miserable fortunes, and the right of your poor child; your mourning cannot avail me, that am but dust.

* * * * *

I can say no more, and death calleth me away. The everlasting God, powerful, infinite, and inscrutable God Almighty, who is goodness itself, the true light and life, keep you and yours, and have mercy upon and forgive my persecutors and false accusers, and send us to meet in His glorious kingdom. My dear wife, farewell; bless my boy, pray for me, and let my true God hold you both in his arms.

7. *From Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy:"—
about 1620.*¹

(*Melancholy and Contemplation.*)

Voluntary solitariness is that which is familiar with melancholy, and gently brings on, like a siren, a

¹ Robert Burton, the author of the "Anatomy of Melancholy," was born at Lindley, in Leicestershire, in 1576; and died

shooing-horn, or some sphinx to this irrevocable gulf: a primary cause, Piso calls it: most pleasant it is at first, to such as are melancholy given, to lie in bed whole days, and keep their chambers; to walk alone in solitary grove, betwixt wood and water, by a brook side; to meditate upon some delightful and pleasant subject which shall affect them most; "*amabilis insania*," and "*mentis gratissimus error*." A most incomparable delight it is so to melancholise, and build castles in the air; to go smiling to themselves, acting an infinite variety of parts, which they suppose and strongly imagine they represent, or that they see acted or done. "*Blanda quidem ab initio*," [pleasant, indeed, it is, at first,] saith Lemnius, to conceive and meditate of such pleasant things sometimes, present, past, or to come, as Rhasis speaks. So delightful these toys are at first, they could spend whole days and nights without sleep, even whole years alone, in such contemplations and fantastical meditations, which are like unto dreams; and they will hardly be drawn from them, or willingly interrupt. So pleasant their vain conceits are, that they hinder their ordinary tasks, and necessary business; they cannot address themselves to them, or almost to any study or employment: these fantastical and bewitching thoughts so covertly, so feelingly, so urgently, so continually, set upon, creep in, insinuate, possess, overcome, distract, and detain them; they

at Christchurch, 1640. His book was published in 1621. It displays a vast extent of reading, and is crowded with quotations, many of which have but little connection with the subject. The book is very amusing, and full of various information.

cannot, I say, go about their more necessary business, stave off, or extricate themselves, but are ever musing, melancholising, and carried along, as he (they say) that is led round about an heath with a puck in the night, &c.

8. *From Hobbes's "Treatise on Human Nature:"* —
*about 1640.*¹

(Pity and Indignation.)

Pity is imagination or fiction of future calamity to ourselves, proceeding from the sense of another man's calamity. But when it lighteth on such as we think have not deserved the same, the compassion is greater, because then there appeareth more probability that the same may happen to us; for the evil that happeneth to an innocent man may happen to every man. But when we see a man suffer for great crimes which we cannot easily think will fall upon ourselves, the pity is the less, and therefore men are apt to pity those whom they love; for whom they love they think worthy of good, and therefore not worthy of calamity. Thence it is also, that men pity the vices of some persons, at the first sight only, out of love to their

¹ Thomas Hobbes, the son of a Protestant clergyman of Malmesbury, was born in that town 1588. He began to write in 1628. His principal works are — a "Translation of the Greek Historian Thucydides," a "Treatise on Human Nature," "Leviathan," "Translations of the Iliad and Odyssey," and "Behemoth, or the Causes of the Civil Wars in England." Hobbes is remarkable for the perspicuity and correctness of his style. He is deficient in imagination and poetical feeling; but in logical precision and force of expression he is unrivalled.

aspect. The contrary of pity is hardness of heart, proceeding either from slowness of imagination, or some extreme great opinion of their own exemption from the like calamity, or from hatred of all or most men.

Indignation is that grief which consisteth in the conception of good success happening to them whom they think unworthy thereof. Seeing, therefore, men think all those unworthy whom they hate, they think them not only unworthy of the good fortune they have, but also of their own virtues. And of all the passions of the mind, these two, indignation and pity, are most raised and increased by eloquence; for the aggravation of the calamity, and extenuation of the fault, augmenteth pity; and the extenuation of the worth of the person, together with the magnifying of his success, which are the parts of an orator, are able to turn these two passions into fury.

9. *From Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living and Holy Dying:"—about 1650.*¹

(*On Prayer.*)

I have seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes

¹ Jeremy Taylor, the "Spenser of English prose," was born at Cambridge, in the year 1613, and died at Lisburn, 1667. The best known of his works are—"Holy Living and Holy Dying," "Sermons," and the "Golden Grove." Beauty of expression is the characteristic of Taylor's style. His writings are pervaded by poetical feeling, and a tone of unaffected piety and tenderness.

to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back by the loud sighing of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings, till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing as if it had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries here below. So is the prayer of a good man: when his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with the infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument; and the instrument became stronger than its prime agent, and raised a tempest, and overruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud; and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose that prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy dove, and dwells with God, till it returns, like the useful bee, loaden with a blessing and the dew of heaven.

10. *From Lord Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion:" — about 1670.*¹

(Reception of the Liturgy at Edinburgh, 1637.)

On the Sunday morning appointed for the work, the Chancellor of Scotland, and others of the Council, being present in the Cathedral church, the dean began to read the Liturgy, which he had no sooner entered upon, but a noise and clamour was raised throughout the church, that no words could be heard distinctly; and then a shower of stones and sticks and cudgels were thrown at the dean's head. The bishop went up into the pulpit, and from thence put them in mind of the sacredness of the place, of their duty to God and the king; but he found no more reverence, nor was the clamour and disorder less than before. The chancellor, from his seat, commanded the provost and magistrates of the city to descend from the gallery in which they sat, and by their authority to suppress the riot; which, at last, with great difficulty they did, by driving the rudest of those who made the disturbance out of the church, and shutting the doors, which gave the dean an opportunity to proceed in the reading of the Liturgy, that was not at all attended or hearkened to by those who remained within the church; and if it had, they who were turned out continued their bar-

¹ Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, was born at Dinton, in Wiltshire, in 1608, and died at Rouen in 1674. He was the author of the "History of the Great Rebellion," which was not, however, published till 1702. The style is incorrect and ungrammatical, better adapted to conversation than to writing; and yet abounding in matter, and inexhaustibly eloquent.

barous noise, broke the windows, and endeavoured to break down the doors, so that it was not possible for any to follow their devotions, &c.

11. *From Burnet's "History of My Own Times,"*
*about 1690.*¹

(*Character of William III.*)

Thus lived and died William III. King of Great Britain, and Prince of Orange. He had a thin and weak body, was brown-haired, and of a clear and delicate constitution. He had a Roman-eagle nose, bright and sparkling eyes, a large front, and a countenance composed to gravity and authority. All his senses were critical and exquisite. He was always asthmatical, and the dregs of the small-pox falling on his lungs, he had a constant deep cough. His behaviour was solemn and serious, seldom cheerful, and but with a few. He spoke little, and very slowly, and most commonly with a disgusting dryness, which was his character at all times, except in a day of battle; for then he was all fire, though without passion, he was then everywhere, and looked to everything. He had no great advantage from his education. De Witt's discourses were of great use to him; and he, being apprehensive of the observation of those who were

¹ Gilbert Burnet, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, was born at Edinburgh, 1643, and died at Clerkenwell, in London, 1715. As many as 145 distinct writings are attributed to him. His principal works are — "The History of the Reformation," and the "History of his own Times." His diction is clear and unpretending; the matter intelligible, and manner lively; but the style is totally deficient in all the higher qualities.

looking narrowly into everything he said or did, had brought himself under a habitual caution that he could never shake off; though in another scene it proved as hurtful as it was then necessary to his affairs. He spoke Dutch, French, English, and German equally well, and understood the Latin, Spanish, and Italian, so that he was well fitted to command armies composed of several nations. He had a memory that amazed all about him, for it never failed him. He was an exact observer of men and things. His strength lay rather in a true discerning and a sound judgement, than in imagination or invention. His designs were always great and good. But it was thought he trusted too much to that, and that he did not descend enough to the humours of the people, to make himself and his notions more acceptable to them, &c.

12. *From Dryden's Preface to the Fables:—*
1700.¹

(*Contrast between Chaucer and Cowley.*)

In the first place, as he (Chaucer) is the Father of English poetry, so I hold him in the same degree of veneration as the Grecians held Homer, or the Romans Virgil. He is a perpetual fountain of good sense; learned in all sciences; and therefore speaks properly

¹ John Dryden was born in Northamptonshire, in 1632, and died 1700. He is known chiefly as a poet. He was the author of "Annus Mirabilis;" translations from Chaucer, Boccaccio, Ovid, Lucretius, Horace, and Virgil; "Alexander's Feast;" "The Hind and the Panther;" numerous Dramas; "Absalom and Achitophel;" Fables, &c. His style is nervous and forcible, not marked by elegance or refinement, but unrivalled in power, vigour, and eloquence.

on all subjects. As he knew what to say, so he knows also when to leave off; a continence which is practised by few writers, and scarcely by any of the ancients, excepting Virgil and Horace. One of our late poets (Cowley) is sunk in his reputation because he could never forego any conceit which came in his way; but swept, like a drag net, great and small. There was plenty enough, but the dishes were ill-sorted; whole pyramids of sweatmeats for boys and women, but little of solid meat for men. All this proceeded not from any want of knowledge, but of judgment. Neither did he want that in discerning the beauties and faults of other poets, but only indulged himself in the luxury of writing; and perhaps knew it was a fault, but hoped the reader would not find it. For this reason, though he must always be thought a great poet, he is no longer esteemed a good writer; and for ten impressions which his works have had in so many successive years, yet, at present, a hundred books are scarcely purchased once a twelvemonth.

13. *Addison's "Panegyric upon Nonsense"—from the Whig Examiner. 1710.¹*

Hudibras has defined nonsense (as Cowley does wit) by negatives. "Nonsense," says he, "is that which is

¹ Joseph Addison was born in 1672, at Milston, near Amesbury, Wiltshire, and died at Holland House, Kensington, 1719. His chief works are—"The Campaign," the tragedy of Cato; and his Essays on various subjects in the *Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*. He is especially celebrated as a prose writer. For delicacy of feeling, liveliness of fancy, and exquisite humour, Addison has never been surpassed.

neither true nor false." These two great properties of nonsense, which are always essential to it, give it such a peculiar advantage over all other writing, that it is incapable of being either answered or contradicted. It stands on its own basis, like a rock of adamant, secured by its natural situation against all conquests or attacks. There is no one place about it weaker than another, to favour an enemy in his approaches. The major and the minor are of equal strength. Its questions admit of no reply, and its assertions are not to be invalidated. A man may as well hope to distinguish colours in the midst of darkness as to find out what to approve and disapprove in nonsense: you may as well assault an army that is buried in entrenchments. If it affirms anything, you cannot lay hold of it; or if it denies, you cannot confute it. In a word, there are greater depths and obscurities, greater intricacies and perplexities, in an elaborate and well-written piece of nonsense than in the most abstruse and profound tract of school-divinity.

14. *From Swift, "Meditation on a Broomstick :"—*
1725.¹

This single stick, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flourishing state in a forest; it was full of sap, full of leaves, and full of boughs; it is now, at best, but

¹ Jonathan Swift was born in Dublin, 1667, and died in 1745. His best known works are — the "Tale of a Tub;" "Drapier's Letters;" and "Gulliver's Travels." His prose style is plain, simple, and perspicuous; and he is, beyond all other writers, distinguished for originality.

the reverse of what it was, a tree turned upside down, the branches on the earth, and the root in the air; it is now handled by every dirty wench, condemned to do her drudgery, and by a capricious kind of fate, destined to make her things clean, and be nasty in itself; at length worn out to the stumps in the service of the maids, it is either thrown out of doors, or condemned to the last use of kindling a fire. When I beheld this, I sighed, and said within myself, surely mortal man is a broomstick! Nature sent him into the world strong and lusty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reasonable vegetable, until the axe of intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left him a withered trunk; he then flies to art, and puts on a periwig, valuing himself upon an unnatural bundle of hairs, all covered with powder, that never grew on his head; but now, should this our broomstick pretend to enter the scene proud of those birchen spoils it never bore, and all covered with dust, though the sweepings of the finest lady's chamber, we should be apt to ridicule and despise its vanity. Partial judges that we are of our own excellences, and other men's defaults!

15. *From Dr. Johnson's Preface to his "English Dictionary."*—1755.¹

It is the fate of those who toil at the lower employments of life to be rather driven by the fear of evil

¹ Samuel Johnson was born at Lichfield in 1709, and died in 1784, at his house in Bolt Court, Fleet Street. His prose works are all short pieces:—"The Rambler," and "Idler;" an edition

than attracted by the prospects of good ; to be exposed to censure without hope of praise ; to be disgraced by miscarriage, or punished for neglect where success would have been without applause, and diligence without reward.

Among these unhappy mortals is the writer of dictionaries ; whom mankind have considered not as the pupil, but the slave of science, the pioneer of literature, doomed only to remove the rubbish and clear obstructions from the paths through which learning and genius press forward to conquest and glory, without bestowing a smile on the humble drudge that facilitates their progress. Every other author may aspire to praise ; the lexicographer can only hope to escape reproach, and even this negative recompense has been yet granted to very few.

I have, notwithstanding this discouragement, attempted a Dictionary of the English language, which, while it was employed in the cultivation of every species of literature, has itself been hitherto neglected ; suffered to spread, under the direction of chance, into wild exuberance ; resigned to the tyranny of time and fashion ; and exposed to the corruptions of ignorance, and caprices of innovation.

No book was ever turned from one language into another without imparting something of its native idiom ; this is the most mischievous and comprehensive innovation ; single words may enter by thousands, and

of Shakspeare, with a preface ; "Journey to the Hebrides ;" "Lives of the Poets ;" "Rasselas." His general style is pompous, bombastic, heavy, and artificial. He is too fond of words of Latin derivation, to the exclusion of those of Saxon origin.

the fabric of the tongue continue the same; but new phraseology changes much at once; it alters not the single stones of the building, but the order of the columns. If an academy should be established for the cultivation of our style—which I, who can never wish to see dependence multiplied, hope the spirit of English liberty will hinder or destroy—let them, instead of compiling grammars and dictionaries, endeavour, with all their influence, to stop the license of translators, whose idleness and ignorance, if it be suffered to proceed, will reduce us to babble a dialect of France, &c.

16. *From Burke's Speech on the case of the Nabob of Arcot:—1785.*¹

When at length Hyder Ali found that he had to do with men who would either sign no convention, or whom no treaty and no signature could bind, and who were the determined enemies of human intercourse itself, he decreed to make the country possessed by these incorrigible and predestinated criminals a memorable example to mankind. He resolved, in the gloomy recess of a mind capacious of such things, to leave the whole Carnatic an everlasting monument of vengeance, and to put perpetual desolation as a

¹ Edmund Burke, our first, and still our greatest writer on the philosophy of politics, was born in Dublin, 1730, and died at Beaconsfield, in 1797. His principal works are—"A Vindication of Natural Society;" an "Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful;" "The Annual Register;" "Reflections on the French Revolution;" and various Speeches made in the House of Commons. His style is lucid and fervent, and his works are pregnant with philosophical reflection.

barrier between him and those against whom the faith which holds the moral element of the world together was no protection. He became at length so confident of his force, so collected in his might, that he made no secret whatever of his dreadful resolution. Having terminated his disputes with every enemy, and every rival, who buried their mutual animosities in their common detestation against the creditors of the Nabob of Arcot, he drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to his new rudiments in the arts of destruction; and, compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivities of the mountains. While the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor, which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic. Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of woe before known or heard of were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants, flying from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered; others, without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank, or sacredness of function, fathers torn from children, husbands from wives, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers, and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest fled to the walled cities. But, escaping from fire, sword, and exile, they fell into the jaws of famine.

17. *From Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire:"* — 1787.¹

The fame of Julius the Second, Leo the Tenth, and Sextus the Fifth is accompanied by the superior merit of Bramante and Fontana, of Raphael and Michæel Angelo: and the same munificence which had been displayed in palaces and temples was directed with equal zeal to revive and emulate the labours of antiquity. Prostrate obelisks were raised from the ground, and erected in the most conspicuous places; of the eleven aqueducts of the Cæsars and consuls, three were restored; the artificial rivers were conducted over a long series of old or of new arches to discharge into marble basins a flood of salubrious and refreshing waters; and the spectator, impatient to ascend the steps of St. Peter's, is detained by a column of Egyptian granite which rises between two lofty and perpetual fountains to the height of one hundred and twenty feet. The map, the description, the monuments of ancient Rome have been elucidated by the diligence of the antiquarian and the student; and the footsteps of heroes, the relics, not of superstition, but of empire, are devoutly visited by a new race of pil-

¹ Edward Gibbon, the historian, was born at Putney, in Surrey, in 1737, and died in London, 1794. His great work, the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," was completed in 1788. There is an imposing splendour in the style of Gibbon which is in strict keeping with the dignity of his subject. He is somewhat artificial in the structure of his sentences, and occasionally borders on the pompous.

grims from the remote, and once savage countries of the north. Of these pilgrims, and of every reader, the attention will be excited by a History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire; the greatest, perhaps, and most awful scene in the history of mankind. The various causes and progressive effects are connected with many of the events most interesting in human annals: the artful policy of the Cæsars, who long maintained the name and image of a free republic; the disorders of military despotism; the rise, establishment, and sects of Christianity; the foundation of Constantinople; the division of the monarchy; the invasion and settlements of the barbarians of Germany and Scythia; the institutions of the civil law; the character and religion of Mahomet; the temporal sovereignty of the popes; the restoration and decay of the Western Empire of Charlemagne; the crusades of the Latins in the East; the conquests of the Saracens and Turks; the ruin of the Greek Empire; the state and revolutions of Rome in the middle age. The historian may applaud the importance and variety of his subject; but while he is conscious of his own imperfections, he must often excuse the deficiency of his materials. It was among the ruins of the Capitol that I first conceived the idea of a work which has amused and exercised near twenty years of my life, and which, however inadequate to my own wishes, I finally deliver to the curiosity and candour of the public.

18. *From the Preface to Roscoe's "Life of Lorenzo de' Medici":—1795.*¹

The motives which have encouraged me to persevere in this undertaking, amidst numerous avocations and duties which connect me with society by almost every tie, have been a high admiration of the character of Lorenzo de' Medici, the singular pleasure which I have enjoyed in tracing his history, and the earnest desire which I feel to place him in that rank in the estimation of my countrymen to which he is so eminently entitled.

I am not, however, arrogant enough to suppose that I have been able to do justice to so extensive and diversified a subject. Precluded by more serious and indispensable avocations from devoting to it a continued attention, I am apprehensive that facts of importance may have either have escaped my diligence, or may be imperfectly related. The difficulties attending a critical examination of works of taste written in a foreign language, contribute to render me diffident of the success of my labours. In the few attempts to translate the poetical pieces of Lorenzo and his contemporaries, I must regret my inability to do them more complete justice; an inability of which I am fully sensible, but for which I do not mean to trouble my reader with any further apology. Such as it is, I submit this performance to the judgment of the public; ready to acknowledge, though not pleased to

¹ William Roscoe, author of the "Lives of Lorenzo de' Medici" and "Leo X.," was born near Liverpool, in 1753, and died 1831. His style is pleasing and fluent, though here and there diffusive.

reflect, that the disadvantages under which an author labours are no excuse for the imperfections of his work.

19. *From Sir Walter Scott's "Waverley."*—1814.¹

There is no European nation which, within the course of half a century, or little more, has undergone so complete a change as this kingdom of Scotland. The effects of the insurrection of 1745,—the destruction of the patriarchal power of the Highland chiefs,—the abolition of the heritable jurisdiction of the Lowland nobility and barons,—the total eradication of the Jacobite party, which, averse to intermingle with the English, or adopt their customs, long continued to pride themselves upon maintaining ancient Scottish manners and customs—commenced this innovation. The gradual influx of wealth and extension of commerce have since united to render the present people of Scotland a class of beings as different from their grandfathers, as the existing English are from those of Queen Elizabeth's time. The political and economical effects of these changes have been traced by Lord Selkirk with great precision and accuracy. But the change, though steadily and rapidly progressive, has, nevertheless, been gradual; and, like those who drift down the stream of a deep and smooth river, we are not aware of the progress we have made until we fix

¹ Walter Scott was born in Edinburgh, August 15th, 1771, and died at Abbotsford, September 21st, 1832. The prose works for which he is so justly celebrated are the "Waverley Novels." His style is essentially narrative. He shines in the picturesque and humorous, and has a graphic power of delineating character.

our eye on the now distant point from which we have been drifted. Such of the present generation as can recollect the last twenty or twenty-five years of the eighteenth century, will be fully sensible of the truth of this statement ; especially if their acquaintance and connections lay among those who, in my younger time, were facetiously called "folks of the old leaven," who still cherished a lingering, though hopeless, attachment to the House of Stewart. This race has now almost entirely vanished from the land, and with it doubtless much absurd political prejudice ; but also many living examples of singular and disinterested attachment to the principles of loyalty which they received from their fathers, and of old Scottish faith, hospitality, worth, and honour.

20. *From Southey's "Naval History of England:"—
about 1830.*¹

The next day the Armada was seen "with lofty turrets, like castles, in front like a half-moon ; the wings thereof spreading out about the length of seven miles, sailing very slowly, though with full sails, the winds," says Camden, "being, as it were, weary with waft-

¹ Robert Southey was born at Bristol, in 1774, and died at Keswick in 1843. His prose writings are very numerous. The most important are the "Lives of Nelson and Wesley ;" the "History of the Peninsular War," and the "Naval History of England ;" with many articles on general literature contributed to the *Quarterly Review*. Southey's style is copious and fluent ; not very brilliant, but vigorous and firm, clear and smooth ; not wanting in dignity, yet easy and idiomatic. In a word, one that deserves to be studied as a model by all who desire to attain a fine style of writing.

ing them, and the ocean groaning under their weight." The intention of surprising the fleet in harbour being frustrated, they passed Plymouth, the English willingly suffering them to pass, that they might chase them in the rear with a foreright wind. And on the morrow, the Lord Admiral sending the "Defiance" pinnace forward, denounced war, by discharging her ordnance, and presently his own ship, the "Ark Royal," thundered thick and furiously upon what he supposed to be the general's ship, but it proved to be the vice-admiral's, Alonso de Leyva's. Soon after Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher played stoutly with their ordnance upon the rear of the enemy, where Recalde, the admiral, commanded; that officer endeavoured to prevent his ships from flying to the main fleet till his own ship was rendered nearly unserviceable, and he was then fain, 'with much ado,' to hasten thither himself. "The duque then gathered together his fleet, which was scattered this way and that, and hoisting more sail, held on his way with what speed he could. Neither could he do any other, seeing both the wind favoured the English, and their ships would turn about with incredible celerity which way soever they pleased to charge, wind, and back about again." The Spaniards then felt a cause of weakness in their excessive strength, their great ships being powerful to defend, but not to offend, to stand but not to move, and therefore far unfit for fight in those narrow seas; their enemies nimble, and ready at all times to annoy them, and as apt to escape harm themselves, by being low-built and easily shot over. Therefore they gathered themselves close in form of a half-moon, and slackened sail, that their whole fleet might keep together. After a smart fight in which he

had injured the enemy much, and suffered little or no hurt himself, Lord Effingham gave over the action, because forty of his ships were not yet come up, having scarcely, indeed, got out of the haven.

21. *From Macaulay's "Essay on the Earl of Chatham."* 1844.

The Duke of Richmond had given notice of an Address to the Throne against the further prosecution of hostilities with America. Chatham had, during some time, absented himself from Parliament, in consequence of his growing infirmities. He determined to appear in his place on this occasion, and to declare that his opinions were decidedly at variance with those of the Rockingham party. He was in a state of great excitement. His medical attendants were uneasy, and strongly advised him to calm himself, and remain at home. But he was not to be controlled. His son William, and his son-in-law, Lord Mahon, accompanied him to Westminster. He rested himself in the Chancellor's room till the debate commenced, and then, leaning on his two young relations, limped to his seat. The slightest particulars of that day were remembered, and have been carefully recorded. He bowed, it was remarked, with great courtliness to those peers who rose to make way for him and his supporters. His crutch was in his hand. He wore, as was his fashion, a rich velvet coat. His legs were swathed in flannel. His wig was so large and his face so emaciated, that none of his features could be discerned, except the high curve of his nose, and his eyes, which still retained a gleam of the old fire.

When the Duke of Richmond had spoken, Chatham

rose. For some time his voice was inaudible. At length his tones became distinct and his action animated. Here and there his hearers caught a thought or an expression which reminded them of William Pitt. But it was clear that he was not himself. He lost the thread of his discourse, hesitated, repeated the same words several times, and was so confused that, in speaking of the Act of Settlement, he could not recall the name of the Electress Sophia. The House listened in solemn silence, and with the aspect of profound respect and compassion. The stillness was so deep that the dropping of a handkerchief would have been heard. The Duke of Richmond replied with great tenderness and courtesy; but while he spoke the old man was observed to be restless and irritable. The Duke sat down. Chatham stood up again, pressed his hand on his breast, and sank down in an apoplectic fit. Three or four lords who sat near him caught him in his fall. The House broke up in confusion. The dying man was carried to the residence of one of the officers of Parliament, and was so far restored as to be able to bear a journey to Hayes. At Hayes, after lingering a few weeks, he expired in his seventieth year. His bed was watched to the last with anxious tenderness by his wife and children; and he well deserved their care. Too often haughty and wayward to others, to them he had been almost effeminately kind. He had through life been dreaded by his political opponents, and regarded with more awe than love even by his political associates. But no fear seems to have mingled with the affection which his fondness, constantly overflowing in a thousand endearing forms, had inspired in the little circle at Hayes.

THE NATURE AND GENIUS OF THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE.

We have already seen that English is a composite language, i. e., derived from many sources. But writers are not agreed on the exact proportion of its elements. Thus, out of one hundred parts Dean Trench would give sixty to Saxon, thirty to Latin (and Latin-French), five to Greek, and five to all other sources.¹ Mr. Shaw considers five-eighths of the language to be of Saxon origin; adding that in our most idiomatic writers (as De Foe) about nine-tenths of the words are Saxon, and in our least idiomatic (as Gibbon) two-thirds are Saxon.² Professor Gäbler tells us that there are about 53,000 words in the English language, of which 3820 may be considered primitives. Of these, some 2500 (2513) are derived from the Germanic, and 1250 from the classic stock.³

From all these calculations, we may pretty safely arrive at the conclusion that at least three-fourths of the present English are still Saxon; and this may sufficiently prove the innate strength of the Germanic part of the language, which has for many centuries so firmly resisted all the influences of foreign invasion and internal oppression, as still to exhibit a considerable preponderance over all the other elements.

This triumph of the Saxon over the French or Latin portion of our language may be also illustrated

¹ "English, Past and Present," p. 11.

² "Outlines of English Literature," p. 27.

³ "Classical Museum," vol. vi. p. 144.

by the well-known fact that, though it is easy enough to compose long sentences in English, every word of which shall be Anglo-Saxon; it is impossible to write the shortest proposition, using only Latin or French words, in which an Anglo-Saxon element, or at least grammatical inflection, will not appear: for example:—"I rode in the highway betwixt Topcliff upon Swale and Boroughbridge, the way being somewhat trodden afore by wayfaring men; the fields on both sides were flat, and lay almost yard deep with snow; the night before had been a little frosty, so that the snow was hard." Here, literally, every word is of Anglo-Saxon origin; and it would be easy to write hundreds of sentences of the same materials, provided that the subject were some ordinary occurrence, and not of a scientific or moral nature.

On the other hand, here is a short sentence in which every word is of Latin origin:—"Avarice produces misery." Now, notwithstanding the Latin derivation of the words, one letter (the *s* in "produces") is sufficient to prove the character of the language to be Teutonic, and not Romanz.¹

It cannot, however, be denied, that the Saxon character of our language, both in its words and inflections, is gradually, though slowly, disappearing. We may take it for granted, that any verb introduced into English will, in future, form its past tense indicative by the addition of *d* or *ed* (as: amuse amused); and not by a change or modification of the vowel-sound (as, run, *ran*); thus adopting the French rather than the Germanic principle. In the same way, all plurals of nouns will, no doubt, for the future

¹ See Max Müller's "Survey of Languages," p. 7.

be formed by the addition of the letter *s* (as page, pages), and not by modifying the internal vowel (as foot, feet).

Having so far ascertained the proportion which Anglo-Saxon bears to the whole language, it will be now expedient to consider those classes of ideas in which the elements of English are principally found. Here, however, the rule will be seldom without exceptions, as may be readily understood when we consider the mixed nature of the language, the long period during which its elementary parts have been amalgamated, and the various influences that have affected it.

WORDS OF SAXON ORIGIN.

1. Terms expressive of primary ideas and simple objects; as, man, woman, sun, moon, land, sea, sky, star, light, shade, &c.
2. Words denoting degrees of kindred; as, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, husband, wife, &c.¹
3. The names of the primary colours: red, black, white, green, brown, blue, yellow.²
4. Names of metals: gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, brass.³
5. The common and simple acts of life: come, go, eat, run, swim, fly, sing, climb, speak, &c.
6. Words denoting parts of the body; as, head, hair,

¹ The French word '*cousin*' is an exception.

² Names of compound colours, as 'purple,' 'orange,' 'lilac,' &c., are derived from other sources.

³ Platinum, a later discovery, is a Spanish word.

eye, nose, mouth, arm, limb, back, breast, finger, nail, &c.

7. Names of domestic animals, while living : cat, hound, horse, sheep, cow, steer, ox, calf, goat, swine.¹
8. Words denoting the cries of such animals : bark, neigh, bleat, low, &c.
9. Names of simple arts ; as, read, write, work, spin, saw, hammer, smite (smith), &c.
10. Terms used in agriculture : till, plough, harrow, field, acre, hedge, gate, corn, barley, wheat, flail, sickle, spade, dig, &c.
11. The primary passions : love, hate, fear, hope, &c.
12. Words denoting simple religious ideas ; as, God, heaven, hell, fiend, wicked, faith, righteous, &c.
13. All pronouns : the verb "to be" in all its parts, all prepositions and conjunctions, the articles and numerals.

WORDS OF NORMAN-FRENCH ORIGIN,

1. Military terms ; as, general, colonel, army, regiment, captain, lieutenant, ensign, corporal, soldier, march, advance, retreat, garrison, &c.
2. Feudal words : chivalry, castle, court, tournament, seneschal, chamberlain, tower, joust, manor, vassal, &c.
3. The various species of animal food (when cooked) : beef, mutton, veal, pork, &c.
4. Names of titles : duke, count, viscount, baron, marquis.²

¹ See the dialogue between Gurth and Wamba, in Scott's "Ivanhoe," chap. i.

² Earl, Thane, Alderman, and Sheriff, are Saxon, and were used before the Conquest.

5. Abstract terms in common use ; as, ignorance, charity, mercy, experience, clemency, bounty, benevolence, ambition.
6. Terms of law ; as, judge, jury, court, examine, prisoner, counsel, advocate, attorney, &c.

WORDS DERIVED FROM GREEK.

Scientific terms ; as, arithmetic, botany, calisthenics, deinotherium, etymology, geography, hydrophobia, ichthyology, lithography, metre, nomad, oxygen, paragraph, rheumatism, scheme, telegraph, zoölogy, &c.

WORDS DERIVED FROM LATIN.¹

1. Words expressing mental action ; as, reflect, consider, imagine, conclude, meditate, contemplate, deliberate, apprehend, &c.
2. Words expressing strong passion ; as, detest, abominate, abhor, desire, terror, consternation, despair, adore, &c.
3. Names of wild animals ; as, lion, tiger, elephant, leopard, panther, &c.

WORDS OF ITALIAN ORIGIN.

1. Technical terms in music and painting ; as, andante, adagio, presto, chiaro-oscuro.
2. Caricature, carneval, ditto, gazette, gondola, grotto, opera, piazza, portico, stanza, vista, volcano, &c.

¹ Many of these, however, are derived from Latin *through* French.

ARABIC WORDS.

1. Some scientific terms : algebra, almanac, azimuth, zenith, zero.
2. Chemical terms ; as, alcohol, alembic, alkali, elixir.
3. Names of some articles of commerce : amber, camphor, coffee, cotton, gazelle, giraffe, sofa, sugar, tamarind, &c.

DUTCH WORDS.

Some sea terms ; as, sloop, schooner, yacht, boom, skipper, tafferel, &c.

SPANISH WORDS.

Alligator, armada, cargo, cigar, creole, don, duenna, flotilla, grandee, mosquito, mulatto, negro, punctilio, sherry, tornado, verandah, &c.

Of the prevalence of monosyllables in our language, we have already taken notice. Whether this should be regarded as an unfavourable point in its character, may be very doubtful. At any rate, we should not rashly conclude that the effect produced by an aggregation of monosyllables is harsh or disagreeable. Much will depend on the order in which such words are arranged ; and a writer of delicate or cultivated ear will instinctively adopt such an arrangement, even in composing monosyllabic sentences, as will greatly modify, if not wholly destroy, any harshness arising from the nature of his materials. But the English language possesses such copiousness and variety of expression, that no one needs ever to be at a loss for
ms ; and it will be always found possible occasion-

ally to intersperse longer words among monosyllables, so as to give greater variety, both of cadence and rhythm, to the period. Besides, it must not be forgotten, that though, perhaps, these monosyllables do not positively contribute to the beauty or harmony of a sentence, they have in them a vigour and force of expression we may look for in vain in more lengthened and more sonorous words. Indeed, it may be truly said, that much of the power and energy of English—especially in the higher efforts of eloquence and poetry—is to be referred to this very source. For, as a large majority of our words are of one syllable, and as every word represents a distinct idea, the effect is that more vigour and concentration of meaning are produced in a smaller space than can be done in most of the continental languages of Europe.

No one who has devoted much attention to the character of our language, can have failed to perceive its remarkable flexibility. English lends itself with such ease to all forms of composition, that any one unacquainted with this power would naturally imagine it to be especially suited to the one form he happened to be studying, and would not suspect that it was equally applicable to all others. Indeed, it would be very difficult to decide on the particular form of expression for which English is best adapted. To prove its capability for pathos and tenderness, we have but to open, almost at random, any of our great poets. Innumerable passages from Spenser, Shakspeare, Goldsmith, Coleridge, &c., attest its remarkable adaptation for this purpose. In the sublime soaring of the loftiest and boldest imagination—the expression of the vast and infinite—it is certainly equal, if not

superior, to any modern language, as clearly shown in the marvellous poetry of Milton. Again, in the stately, dignified march of philosophy and history, it is singularly forcible and impressive, as the compositions of Hume, Dugald Stewart, and Gibbon sufficiently prove.

If we turn to the elegant and fanciful, in what language can we look for anything so exquisitely graceful and airy, so sparkling with brilliant beauty, as Pope's "Rape of the Lock," or Shakspeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream?" For the purpose of satire, whether it be acrimonious and venomous, as in the writings of Swift, earnest and serious, as in Cowper, or delicate and humorous, as in Addison, English may be safely pronounced second to none in existence. It is equally well adapted to express the violence of hatred, jealousy, and anger, or the gentler emotions of the heart. Another phase of its nature is its power to express sound and sterling good sense, a high moral tone, and a thoughtful philosophy,—qualities, indeed, which may be found, together with others, in most English writers of eminence.

This extraordinary flexibility of our language is most probably owing to the variety and number of sources from which it is drawn. Its vigour, sturdy strength, and deep feeling, which we may regard as its fundamental qualities, are derived from the Anglo-Saxon. Its animation, fire, and activity are probably of Norman-French origin; while for its philosophical and moral tone we must look to a Greek or a Latin source. Thus, English, for whatever purpose it may be required, seem to possess an almost equal power of adapting and all these characteristics, blending with

each other and mixed together, produce in it a plastic nature, which moulds itself to the expression of almost every state of mind or feeling.

Another prominent characteristic of our language is its extensive power of combination. To this, together with its monosyllabic nature, it is indebted for its brevity and condensation of expression. To say much in few words has always been regarded as a great difficulty, and consequently a great merit; but in English the very nature of the language will, in this respect, materially assist the writer, for it is a question whether more can be expressed in fewer words in any modern language than in our own.

According to most philologists, the principle of agglutination, or the attraction of words to each other, operates at a very early stage of every language. Simple ideas would be at first represented by single syllables, but, in process of time, ideas being attracted to each other, words of two, three, &c., syllables would be formed. This may be shown in the ancient classical languages; the root expresses the primary idea, and the ending, or inflection, shows the relation in which it stands to other ideas. Thus, the Latin root *nub* corresponds with the English *cloud*; but if we add the inflections *es*, *is*, *i*, *em*, *e*, &c., these endings, or cases, as they are called by grammarians, mark its various relations. It appears to be the natural tendency of language, after a time, to rid itself of these inflections, and to supply their places by prepositions and signs; at any rate, it is well known that the older a language, the less of inflection it retains. This is true of our own; many endings of words found in Old English have now disappeared; for example, the termi-

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which are pertinent to still occasionally found in
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THE WRITERS ADVANTAGE A POWER OF INFLECTION NOT ELSE POSSESSED. IT ALSO SEEMS TO BE COMPOUNDED IN MANY INSTANCES BY AN INCREASED POWER OF COMBINATION. ITS COMPOUND WORDS ARE FORMED IN VARIOUS WAYS. 1. BY AN ADJECTIVE AND A PARTICIPLE; AS "grey-haired," "dark-eyed," "heart-broken," &c. 2. BY TWO NOUNS; AS "hand-and-mill-stone," "scholar-knave," "half-moon," "thunder-bolt," &c. 3. BY AN ADVERB AND A PARTICIPLE; AS "far-faring," "long-expected," "ill-assured," "well-remembered," &c. 4. BY A NOUN AND A PARTICIPLE; AS "joy-dispensing," "heart-inviting," "sea-facing," "God-fearing," "ivy-wreathed," "silver-lined," &c. In some few cases, three words are combined; as in "matter-of-fact," "out-of-doors," "eye-and-ear," &c. It may be truly asserted that no continental language possesses this principle in the same degree as English. In German it operates more extensively, but in all the Romance languages there is little or no power of combination, and their forms of expression are consequently more diffusive. The words "cloud-capped," "heart-broken," &c., have no corresponding single terms in French, Italian, or Spanish. All such English words

must be translated into these languages by a circumlocution, which, of necessity, weakens the expression.

It would be a great error to judge of the copiousness or poverty of a language by the size of its dictionary, or the number of words it contains. All nations are continually borrowing and lending words. In this respect a certain though imperceptible change is incessantly going on. Some words are adopted, and others fall into disuse, as improvements in art, science, &c., may require new terms, or as old ones are found to be no longer necessary; so that every half century may be said to witness the language in a different condition. Whether these innovations and fallings off are always real gains or losses, may be in many cases doubtful; but this natural law of change continually operates, and no human power will ever prevent it. But the copiousness of a language is much better determined by the variety of meaning in words, than by their number. For, when one word may be used in different senses, each of these senses may be considered as equivalent to a word of but one meaning; and in such cases, the language has a decided advantage over others in possessing the power of expressing many shades or slight varieties of signification.

Delicacy of expression must in a great measure depend upon copiousness. Where there is a greater variety to choose from, there must be more shades of difference in meaning, and consequently a greater power of nicety and accuracy. Here, again, English stands pre-eminent; and there can be little doubt that the copiousness, variety, and delicacy of our language are caused by its mixed nature. In a great majority of cases, we have Anglo-Saxon, corre-

sponding with Latin or French terms, closely resembling each other, and yet not identical in meaning; as, liberty (L.), freedom (A.-S.); vicinity (L.), neighbourhood (A.-S.); reply (L.), answer (A.-S.); bounty (L.), goodness (A.-S.); difficult (L.), hard (A.-S.); comprehend (L.), understand (A.-S.); &c. It is also curious to observe how many words of slightly different shades of meaning seem to cluster round a generic term, as shoots from a parent stem. Take the generic term *leave*. What a variety of modes or species of 'leaving' we have in the words 'quit,' 'forsake,' 'give up,' 'abandon,' 'desert,' 'resign,' 'relinquish,' &c.,—all of these containing the idea of leaving, and also expressing some accessory idea of manner or circumstance.

But shades of meaning are found not only in different words; for in English, the same word, either by a change of the internal vowel-sound, or by the addition of a prefix or affix, frequently has its signification modified. The principles of augmentation, diminution, and repetition, which give such a variety of expression in Italian, exist, though not in the same degree, in our language. For example, the termination *oon* in certain words conveys the idea of increased size; as in *balloon* (a large ball), *lagoon* (a large lake), *baboon* (a big baby), &c. The endings *et*, *ling*, and *kin*, have a correspondingly diminishing effect; as in 'cruet,' 'pocket,' and 'turret,' from 'cruise,' 'poke,' and 'tower;' 'gosling,' 'foundling,' 'duckling,' from 'goose,' 'find,' and 'duck;' 'lambkin,' from 'lamb;' and 'napkin,' from (the French) 'nappe.' The ending *le*, in many verbs, expresses repetition or continued action, as in 'prattle,' from 'prate;' 'grapple,' from

'gripe;' 'scuffle,' from 'shove;' 'ramble,' from 'roam,' &c. But it is unnecessary to multiply examples; hundreds of cases might be added, to prove how extensively these principles operate in the English language.

Many writers have lamented the falling off of Saxon words, terminations, and forms from English. But all such regrets are vain and futile: in this the language does but obey a law of Nature, who seems to have decreed that there shall be a rise, a period of vigour, and a time of decay, to everything human. On the other hand, it is certainly the duty of every one who loves his language as a part of his native country, to assist in preserving it in as pure a state as possible, — not blindly to follow a new fashion in the introduction of words, but strenuously to resist all pedantic and unnecessary innovations, and to persist in rejecting all words for the use of which no good authority can be shown. Eminent writers might also do a real service by occasionally extending the use of words already adopted. De Quincey, no mean authority in such matters, complains of the confined sense in which many English words are used, and proposes that their meanings shall be more variously applied. "There is an occasional tendency," he says, "in the use and practice of the English language, capriciously to limit the use of certain words. Thus, for instance, the word *condign* is used only in connection with the word *punishment*; the word *implicit* is used only in connection with *faith* or *confidence*. So also the word *putative* is restricted most absurdly to the one sole word *father* in a question of doubtful affiliation. These and other words, if unlocked from their absurd imprisonment, would become extensively useful. We

should say, for instance, 'condign honours,' 'condign rewards,' 'condign treatment' (treatment appropriate to the merits), thus at once realising two rational purposes, viz., giving a useful function to a word which at present has none, and also providing an intelligible expression for an idea, which otherwise is left without the power of uttering itself, except through a ponderous circumlocution. Precisely in the same circumstances of idle and absurd sequestration, stands the word 'polemic.' At present, according to the popular usage, this word has some fantastic inalienable connection with controversial theology. There cannot be a more childish chimera. No doubt there is a polemic side or aspect of theology; but so there is of all knowledge—so there is of every science."¹

It has been frequently said, and certainly with some truth, that the English language is deficient in melody. Though it cannot be denied that there are languages which excel ours in fulness and beauty of sound, it is the writer's deliberate opinion that the truth is here greatly exaggerated—that English is by no means so harsh as it is generally represented—and that in this, as in many similar cases, the prejudice, once adopted, is handed down from one generation to another, and is at length admitted as a sort of demonstrated proposition which requires no further investigation.

¹ The word '*inveterate*' is in a similar predicament. It should properly qualify whatever has gained strength by age; but it is always used in a bad sense. We hear of *inveterate* enmity, *inveterate* malice, revenge, &c.; but never of *inveterate* affection, friendship, &c.; and yet there is no good reason why it should not be extended to the latter meaning.

There are here principally three points for consideration:—1. The number of close vowels in English. 2. The clustering of consonants; and 3. The frequent hissing sound of the letter *s*. These appear to be the chief instances in which harshness of sound is produced, and to all of these we must undoubtedly plead guilty. First, the open vowel of the primitive is in many English words made close in the derivative. Thus, we have ‘bite’ (pronounced with the vowel *i* open), but ‘bīt’ and ‘bitter’ with close vowels. In the same way ‘zēal’ makes ‘zēa’lous;’ ‘mōon’ ‘mō’nth;’ ‘strōng’ ‘strē’ngth,’ &c. Secondly, our language has many words with three or even more consonants coming together; for example, the initials *str*, *scr*, and *shr*, as in ‘stream,’ ‘scratch,’ ‘shriek;’ the final *th*, as in ‘width,’ ‘strength,’ ‘breadth,’ &c.; the initial *th* (hard), as in ‘thick,’ ‘thistle,’ &c., and a large majority of words end in consonants. Thirdly, the frequent repetition of the letter *s* is caused, first, by its appearance in all the roots beginning with that letter; secondly, by being almost exclusively the termination of plural forms of nouns, and of their possessive singular; and lastly, by its being the ending of the third person singular of the present indicative of every verb in the language.

But for these admitted disadvantages there is a compensation. English is comparatively free from the guttural sounds of most of the Teutonic and Slavonic languages, and it does not possess that disagreeable nasal tone which may certainly be regarded as materially interfering with the beauty of French as a spoken language. Besides, the almost total absence of inflection gives a much greater variety of endings to

words than can be expected where a system of inflection is adopted. The "*veni, vidi, vici*" of Cæsar, is certainly not very pleasing in sound; neither is the "*abiit, excessit, evasit, erupit*" of Cicero; nor the "*tædet harum quotidianarum formarum*" of Terence. If these were translated into English, we should probably have a different ending for every word.

After a study of its grammatical forms, the real character of a language must be looked for in its idiomatical expression. An idiom may be defined as a form of words peculiar to some one language, and may be known by the impossibility of translating it literally into any other. Thus, the common English form of salutation, "How do you do?" is idiomatic; for we could not correctly translate this expression word for word into any other European language. Another example of idiom appears in the incomplete form of our present tense: "What are you doing?" "I am reading an amusing book," &c. None of these are translatable literally. A study of idiom will give a more perfect knowledge of the tone of thought, habits, and feelings of a people, than can be derived from any other source. Idiomatic expressions are, on the whole, the best criterion of the merits of a language; and they must be looked for in the ordinary forms of daily and domestic intercourse, and the common conversation of the people, rather than in the elaborate and polished forms of written composition. It is the idiom that stamps the individuality of a language, and distinguishes the people as a nation; and it is this part that is always the most difficult for foreigners to master. An investigation of the philosophy of English idiom would, no doubt, throw a great light on

the history of this nation. It has been often remarked, that the energy and activity of our national character are perceptible in our common forms of speech ; and that the spirit of commercial enterprise, as well as the industry, caution, and skill which distinguish us as a nation, may all be here discovered. This is, no doubt, true ; and we may safely conclude that the real nature of the English mind will be best understood by the study of English idiom.

The extraordinary extension of his language should be to every Englishman a subject of natural and honourable pride. No language, either in ancient or modern times, has ever been so widely spread as English. If we compare the extent of territory over which the ancient Latin was spoken with that in which English now predominates, we shall be struck with the difference ; and when we remember that neither India nor America was known to the Romans, we shall easily see how much more widely diffused is the modern English than was the ancient Latin language. In modern times, French, at one period, had a considerable preponderance in Europe, and it is still very generally studied, and even spoken, on the Continent. But, on the whole, the preponderance is now greatly on the side of English. It is spoken throughout England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man (though in all these places there are still some scanty remains of Keltic dialects) ; and in the United States, in Canada, Australia, and all the English colonies and dependencies, it is now the prevailing language.

English was first introduced into North America in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The States of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Georgia, &c., were

successively settled, and the preponderance of the English language was at length established over the greater part of the Northern Continent of America. During the rule of Cromwell, the Island of Jamaica was taken from the Spaniards, and our language soon after prevailed in most of the West India Islands. Canada became an English colony after the taking of Quebec in the Seven years' war. As this province had been previously a French possession, the French language is still maintained there; so that at the present time, both English and French are spoken in that country.

The Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope fell into our hands during the war of the Great French Revolution. Here, as in Canada, a double language prevails, Dutch and English being both maintained.

In India, the English language prevails over a vast space of territory, but here the native dialects are all maintained to a much greater extent than in our other colonial possessions.

In Australia and New Zealand, English is the only European language spoken.

In the smaller possessions of the English in various parts of Europe, as Jersey, Guernsey, Heligoland, Gibraltar, Malta, &c., the English language also prevails.

But this is not all. The probably future propagation of English is also a matter for consideration. It seems likely that, in the course of time, both the continents of America, South as well as North, will fall into the hands of the European inhabitants of the northern portion, and that the Americans will also plant settlements in many parts of the eastern shores

of the Pacific Ocean. Whatever may be the future destiny of China and Japan, many portions of these empires will, in all probability, fall under the dominion of an Anglo-Saxon race; and if so, the English language will prevail far more extensively than at present in all the quarters of the globe. True, this is mere matter for speculation; but judging from present circumstances, and the wonderfully active spirit of those who speak English, it is not altogether unreasonable to conclude that if it should advance at the rate we have witnessed for the last fifty years, it will eventually become the dominant language of the world.

It may be thought by some that the extraordinary merit here claimed for our language is the natural effect of a pardonable national vanity. But these views are supported by those of a learned foreign linguist, who cannot be influenced by such feelings, and who, moreover, may be cited as the highest authority on this subject. Jacob Grimm, in his work "On the Origin of Language," has the following passage: "English possesses a veritable power of expression, such as perhaps never stood at the command of any other language of men. Its highly spiritual genius, and wonderfully happy development and condition, have resulted from a surprisingly intimate union of the two noblest languages in modern Europe, the Teutonic and the Romanz. It is well known in what relation these two stand to one another in the English tongue; the former supplying in far larger proportion the material groundwork, the latter the spiritual conceptions. In truth, the English language, which by no mere accident has produced and upborne

the greatest and most predominant poet of modern times, as distinguished from the ancient classical poetry (I can, of course, only mean Shakspeare), may with all right be called a world-language; and, like the English people, appears destined hereafter to prevail with a sway more extensive even than its present over all the portions of the globe. For in wealth, good sense, and closeness of structure, no other of the languages at this day spoken deserves to be compared with it,—not even our German, which is torn, even as we are torn, and must first rid itself of many defects before it can enter boldly into the lists as a competitor with the English.”

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS ON PART VIII.

1. What opinion is now generally held by scholars concerning the origin and affinities of European languages?
2. In what countries of Europe did the Kelts originally settle?
3. What parts of Europe were occupied by a Teutonic migration?
4. What European languages belong to the Slavonic family?
5. What traces of their language did the Romans leave in Britain?
6. Quote some modern English words of Keltic origin.
7. In what parts of Europe are the remains of the Keltic language still found?
8. In what century was Anglo-Saxon substituted for Keltic in this country?
9. State some particulars in which Anglo-Saxon differs from English.
10. What effect had the Danish invasions on the Saxon language of England?

11. In what century was the Norman-French language introduced into this country ?
12. Mention the two dialects then used in France.
13. By what general characteristics were these distinguished from each other ?
14. Which of these two was brought into England at the Conquest ?
15. By what classes of society were the two languages, Norman-French and Anglo-Saxon, spoken after the Conquest ?
16. What written specimens of Anglo-Saxon still remain ?
17. For what purposes was Latin used in England for 200 years after the Conquest ?
18. And in what cases was Norman-French adopted ?
19. What name is given to the Saxon language used in England from 1066 to 1250 ?
20. What specimens of this language may be quoted ?
21. During what period did the "Early English" last ?
22. What specimens have we of this condition of the language ?
23. What is meant by "Middle English ?"
24. Give some examples of "Middle English."
25. From what date commences what is called "Modern English ?"

-
1. From what sources is the English language derived ?
 2. Which of its parts still preponderates ?
 3. How may this be proved ?
 4. In what cases are Saxon words still used ?
 5. State some in which Norman-French is adopted.
 6. Quote some English words derived from Greek and Latin.
 7. What terms are derived from Italian ?
 8. Give some cases of English words derived from Arabic, Dutch, and Spanish.

-
1. What effect has the prevalence of monosyllables on the English language ?
 2. What rule should be adopted with regard to the use of monosyllables ?

3. How may it be proved that English is a flexible language ?
4. To what cause may this flexibility be attributed ?
5. What is meant by a power of combination in a language ?
6. Show that English possesses this power extensively.
7. What is meant by an inflected language ?
8. Is Modern English an inflected language ?
9. Which is the best criterion of the copiousness of a language ?
10. What may be said of English with respect to delicacy and variety of expression ?
11. What is the best rule to follow as regards the adoption of new words ?
12. What is the general opinion concerning the harmony of the English language ?
13. What points should be here considered ?
14. What compensations does English possess for these disadvantages ?
15. What is meant by "Idiom ?"
16. What lesson may be learnt from a careful study of idiom ?
17. What may be said of the extension of the English language ?
18. In whose reign was English first introduced into North America ?
19. At what period did Canada become an English colony ?
20. By what means was English introduced at the Cape of Good Hope ?
21. In what other parts of the globe is English found ?
22. Upon what grounds may we rationally conclude that our language will be still further extended ?

THE END.

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